

History of the
Domination
of the Arabs in Spain
Vol. 2
1888



Librarian

Uttarpara Joykrishna Public Library
Govt. of West Bengal

HISTORY

OF THE

DOMINION OF THE ARABS IN SPAIN.

CHAP. XCVIII.—OF THE HONOURS WHICH THE HAGIB MUHAMAD ALMANZOR CONFERRED ON MEN OF LEARNING, AND OF OTHER EVENTS.

BUT a short time only in each year did the Hagib Muhamad Almanzor pass in his expeditions to the frontier: the place which he most commonly made his abode was Cordova, and when there his house was as a sort of academy or place of assemblage for men of learning and genius. Among the many by whom it was frequented, one of the most distinguished was Obada Ben Abdallah Ben Meassemai Abu Becri, of Malaga, who was one of the best poetical writers then living in Andalusia. He wrote the History of the Spanish Poets, with a Borda or eulogy on the Anabi* Muhamad, that was much renowned. To obtain permission for paying a visit to the vizier of Muhamad Almanzor, Ahmed Ben Soaid Ben Hezam, Obada composed an extempore copy of verses of singular eloquence, which were much admired by the vizier, who gave him a hundred dinars of gold for the same, and from that moment commanded that his house should be open to the poet at all hours. Another of the eminent persons by whom the house of the Hagib Almanzor was most assiduously frequented, was

* Anabi or Nabi, Prophet.

Abdelwariz Ben Sofian; but there were besides many others from the most illustrious families of Cordova, who were constantly to be found there.

Muhamad Almanzor likewise established an academy or school for the tongues, wherein the most learned men, and those already known for the production of useful or ingenious works in the various branches of erudition, were alone permitted to hold chairs. The Hagib was a diligent visitor to the Aljamas, the colleges, and the Madrisas or schools for youth, where he would seat himself among the students and disciples, not suffering that the course of instruction should be interrupted either by his entrance or departure. To those who most distinguished themselves in these institutions he gave prizes; and that not to the students only, but to the masters also. By this his acquaintance with the students, or by the means here described, the Hagib always knew where to find the person he required when a choice was about to be made of learned Cadies for the principal Aljamas of the kingdom, or if an election were taking place of Moeries and Alchatibes, who are readers and preachers for the mosques.

The King Hixem Ben Alhakem El Muyad Billah continued meanwhile to live in the retirement of his different palaces, and to amuse himself among the delicious gardens that surrounded those residences. None could visit him without the permission of the Sultana mother, or of the Hagib Muhamad Abdallah Ben Abi Amer. He was never named unless it were in the Chotba or public prayer of the Juma; that weekly mention, with his name on the Coin and on certain Inscriptions, being the sole evidence of his existence. When the young sovereign repaired to the Pascuas, the Easter solemnities that is to say, or other festivals celebrated in the mosques, he never came forth from the Macsura* until every other person had left the

* The Macsura was a tribune or gallery but slightly raised above the pavement, placed in the principal part of the mosque; it was surrounded by a grating formed of gilt rods, and here the kings took their place when they appeared at the Zala or public prayers. In all the Mosques, the boys were placed behind the old men, and the women behind the boys; by whom they were entirely separated from the men. At the close of the worship, the men remained to wait until all the

building, when he also departed, but so closely surrounded by his attendants and guard, that none could behold his person, and he was thus reconducted to his Alcazar, which was at no great distance from the mosque, almost without the people having remarked or been aware of his presence.

Now, from the year 365, Alhassan Ben Kenz had remained at the court of Nasir Ben Maad, the Soldan of Egypt, to which he had retired, as has been related, after leaving that of the King Alhakem Almostansir Billah, at Cordova. It was now the year 373, and the Soldan Ben Maad wrote letters to his General Balkim Ben Zeiri Ben Menad, who governed Africa in his name, commanding him to favour the enterprises of Alhassan in the land of Magreb. With these letters, Alhassan Ben Kenz repaired to the city of Tunis, where he was received with much honour by Balkim Ben Zeiri, who had no sooner read the letters of the Soldan, than he made instant preparations for paying obedience to the tenor of the same. He furnished Alhassan with three thousand horse, and this force being increased by the adherence to his party of several Cabilas from different parts of Barbary, Alhassan Ben Kenz entered Almagreb, when he was proclaimed sovereign in many of the towns.

Intelligence of these things having been sent to Cordova, the Hagib Muhamad Almanzor instantly despatched a select body of cavalry, conducted by his vizier Abu Alhakem Omar Ben Abdallah Ben Abi Amer, to whom he gave the government of Almagreb, with that of all its dependencies. Alhassan, on his part, had no sooner been made acquainted with the approach of the armament bearing these troops, than he hastened to the coast, met the Andalusians on their landing, and attacking them at once, a sanguinary conflict ensued, which was maintained for some time with equal obstinacy on both sides. But Alhassan was at length the conqueror; defeating the Andalusian forces, he compelled them to retreat, and they hastened to take refuge in Medina Cebla, where Alhassan besieged them for some days. Abu Alhakem Omar then wrote an account of his misfortune to Cordova, when the Hagib Almanzor

women had disappeared. No maiden went to a mosque where there was not a place set apart for the reception of the virgins; and every woman was carefully wrapped up and covered with her veils.—*Condé.*

sent his own son, Abdelmelic Abu Meruan, who, although very young, was already highly esteemed for his qualities as a military leader. He now hastened with all speed to the assistance of Abu Alhakem, who was his uncle, having been furnished by the Hagib with a well-appointed army for that purpose.

Muhamad Almanzor himself had meanwhile proceeded once more into the East of Spain with a very powerful host: marching at the head of the Cordovan cavalry, he passed by Garnata, Baza, Lorca, and Tadmir, remaining for some time in the last-named city, where he hoped to be joined by the forces of Algarve and others whom he had commanded to be brought to him by the ships of that coast.

Here Muhamad Almanzor was entertained in the house of the Amil or governor of the city, Ahmed Ben Alchiteb Ben Dagim, who during the three and twenty days of the Hagib's abode in his dwelling, daily feasted all the generals and other cavaliers by whom Almanzor was accompanied, and that most splendidly: nay, the horses and servants who were in attendance on those nobles were in like manner fed at the cost of the governor.

For the principal personages among his guests, Ahmed Ben Alchiteb caused the most delicate baths of rose-water to be prepared, expending a profusion of rich perfumes and aromatic essences, moreover, during every meal, and at all the assemblies in his apartments of those highly honoured visitors. Each person was supplied with a commodious and pleasant chamber, having a bed covered with precious stuffs of silk and gold: at a word, the entertainment was in every respect most princely.

When the Hagib Muhamad Almanzor was about to take his departure from the house of that magnificent host, he said to the latter, in the presence of all his generals and cavaliers, "Of a truth, Ahmad Ben Alchiteb, thou dost not know how to lodge men whose occupation is war, and I shall take care to send none of the troops thy way when they are proceeding to the frontier, or bound for Algihed:* the repose of such men should be fighting, and their best ornaments are their arms. Yet to a man of such liberality and so generous a heart, the treatment of a mere tax-paying

* The sacred war.

vassal is by no means suited, and therefore, in the name of our lord the King Hixem Ben Alhakem, I make thee free of all tribute for the remainder of thy life." This happened on the twelfth day of the moon Dylhagia, in the year 375.

We find it related, that when the Hagib Muhamad Ben Abdallah Ben Abi Amer Almanzor departed from Cordova for this expedition, there went forth with him Abu Omar Ahmed Ben Chateb, called Alhazin, and that this man entertained the Hagib, with all his company, at his houses on the way, as he did at his dwelling in Murcia, when the latter was proceeding on the expedition to Barcelona, causing him to be there met and received by Aben Soheib Prefect of the Asadaca, and by all the principal persons of the city. The son of this Alhazin, called Abulazbaz Muzar, entertained in like manner Abdelmelic Abu Meruan, the son of the Hagib Muhamad, with all his cavaliers and followers, in a journey, during which the latter passed through Murcia, and for these causes both father and son were rendered free of the gates of Cordova, a privilege which had once before been granted to their house by the Meruans. Yet in these days, that illustrious family is living in some remote part—God only knows the place—miserable and despised like the most wretched of Alarabes. But doth not Allah see all things?

Abu Meruan Ben Hayan, in his History of the Alamerics gives us to know that the march of the Hagib Muhamad Almanzor upon Barcelona took place in the year 375, being the twenty-third expedition undertaken by that leader. He directed his steps towards the East of Spain, by Elvira and Basta to Tadmir, and at Murcia, which is the seat of the Alcades of Tadmir, he was entertained as aforesaid in the house of Aben Chateb, where, according to the same Aben Hayan, he remained thirteen days, all his servants and cavaliers daily receiving bread, flesh, and fruit at their Posadas from the same liberal hand. To Muhamad Almanzor and his generals, the splendid feasts presented each day, with preserves and fruits of every kind, were matter of marvel. When the Hagib, being about to leave the city, was informed by his viziers and the masters of accounts that Aben Chateb had supplied all their wants, he returned thanks in the name of their lord, the King Hixem Ben Alhakem; and on his return to Cordova,

relating the facts to the young sovereign, he proposed that Chateb and his family should be freed from the payment of all tributes. Almanzor furthermore invited Aben Chateb to the capital, where he paid him great honours, and gave him the name of the Hospitable. On his departure, the Hagib presented to him a beautiful slave for his palace, when Aben Chateb returned well content to his Amilia or government of Tadmir, where all his rights and privileges were preserved to him.

Writing on the same subject, Ahu Becri Ahmed Ben Sind Ben Abilfayadh informs us, in that history of his which was translated into Hebrew, that for the campaign of Barcelona the Hagib Muhamad Almanzor departed from Cordova on the thirteenth day of the moon Dylhagia, in the year 374, which was the fifth of May Anno Domini 984. He adds, that from Elvira, Almanzor went to Basta, Lorca, and Murcia, where he was lodged during three and twenty days in the house of Ahmed Ben Dagim Ben Chateb, and in that of his son Abulaswaz Muza Ben Ahmed, not a man of his train spending a Dirhem. Meats and fruits of various excellence were daily served to Almanzor in precious vessels, while his bath was perfumed with delicious rose-water; and the Hagib, astonished at this magnificence, gave thanks to his host, whom he confirmed in his Amilia, and whose hospitality he celebrated in many praises on his return to Cordova.

In that campaign, the Hagib Muhamad Almanzor was accompanied by Omayya Ben Galib, called the Morori, from his native place Moror, a man of distinguished genius in poetry, who celebrated the generosity of Ahmed Ben Dagim the Tadmiri, in very elegant verses.

On his march, the Hagib Almanzor assembled many troops, both cavalry and foot-soldiers, from Valencia, Tortosa, and Tarragona, with whom he proceeded to the plains of Barcelona. The King of Afranc* came forth against him with a vast army, but though his people were double

* This King of Afranc, or of the Franks, was Borel, Count of Barcelona. All the region of the Pyrenees, with its valleys and declivities, was then divided into small lordships, and this on the Spanish as well as on the French side. These rulers were all called by our Arabs kings and lords of Afranc.—*Condé*.

those of the Moslemah in number, yet, by the ability of Almanzor and the aid of God, the valour of the Faithful prevailed: they readily broke and routed that multitude of runn-hill-people, who never fight well in the plains, more especially when they have some place of refuge near them seeing that, in this case, they soon seek their safety flight. They now fled in much disorder to the city of Barcelona, where they were besieged by the Moslemah with such ardour and persistence, that the Lord of Afrance, hoping to defend the place successfully, and seeing a prospect of succour, fled secretly by sea, which he did in the night-time, the darkness preventing the ships of Algarve, which guarded the shore, from perceiving his bark and so that obscurity favoured his escape. Two days afterwards, the city surrendered on conditions agreed to by the inhabitants, receiving security for their lives, but paying the tribute of blood* for every head among them.

The frontier being secured, Muhamad Almanzor returned to Cordova by the centre of Spain, dismissing the troops of Valencia and Tadmir, and visiting on his way various cities of the kingdom, in all of which he left the memory of his passage by the works which he commanded to be executed for the security, convenience, and advantage of each.

When the Hagib arrived in Cordova, one of his first acts was to appoint a man, of whose reputation for learning he had heard much discourse, to be Prefect of Azala, or Chief Priest in the Mosque of King Hixem. This was Said Ben Edris Ben Yahye, called El Salemi, Mocri or reader of the Aljama of Seville, a learned person who had travelled in the East, had made his Alhig, or sacred pilgrimage, and was admired for his excellences and virtues, no less than for his erudition. He was besides endowed with a fine and sonorous voice. In that office Said Ben Edris remained until the breaking out of the civil war, when he returned to Seville, and there died full of days and honour, at the end of the year 428.

Meanwhile, Alhassan Ben Kenuz, who still kept the General Omar Ben Abdallah besieged in Cebla, receiving intelligence

* The tribute of blood was always a heavy sum.—*Condé*.

of the departure of Abdelmelic, the son of Muhamad Almanzor, from Cordova, and knowing that he was approaching to attack his own forces in Almagreb, instantly gave himself up for lost, and ill-advised as he was, resolved to yield his destiny to the hands of his foes. He therefore wrote to Omar Ben Abdallah, requesting that general to give him a safe-conduct for himself and his family, declaring that he had determined to pass over into Spain, and commit himself to the mercy of King Hixem Ben Alhakem. Omar at once replied as Alhassan had desired, and despatched intelligence to Abdelmelic, the son of Almanzor, of the wish thus expressed; then Abdelmelic, referring the matter, by swift Forenicos or couriers, to his father, the latter commanded him to complete the negotiation without delay, assuring to Alhassan Ben Kenuz whatever securities he could desire, and recommending that Ameer to repair with all speed to Cordova.

All this was then done as had been commanded by Muhamad Almanzor, and the Prince Alhassan Ben Kenuz immediately passed over into Andalusia, whereupon the Hagib was apprised of his arrival by his son Abdelmelic. But when Almanzor found that Alhassan Ben Kenuz was in his power, he wrote an order to his son, declaring that the service of King Hixem demanded the life of that prince; wherefore, in despite of the solemn promise and safe-conduct given to Alhassan, his head was taken off, in the plain near Alcazar El Ocab, in the territory of Tarifa.

Men say, that at the moment when the betrayed prince was beheaded, there arose a sudden and violent wind, which, taking the vestment from the shoulders of Alhassan, carried it off, and the mantle disappearing immediately could never be discovered again. Those of his household and his disconsolate family then interred his body, while the cavaliers entrusted with that office by the Hagib Muhamad Almanzor repaired with the head to Cordova. This was done in the moon of Giumada Primera, and in the year 375.

The government of Alhassan Ben Kenuz had lasted sixteen years during the first period of his rule—from the year 347 to the year 364, that is to say; but in the second period it endured one year and nine months only. The family

left by Prince Alhassan established itself in Cordova, partly near the Aljama of Magarawa, and partly in the divan of the king, where they remained until the race of Omeya had ceased to bear sway, and Abu Ben Hamad had commenced his rule in Cordova, when the memory of that illustrious family began to revive.

With the death of Alhassan Ben Kenuz, the house of Edris became extinct in Almagreb. The dynasty had commenced its reign in the year 172, and on Thursday, the seventh day of Rebie Primera, on which day the oath of allegiance was taken in Medina Velita to Edris Ben Abdallah Ben Hassan. From that time until the day when Alhassan Ben Kenuz was treacherously assassinated, which was in Giumada of the year 375, there had elapsed 202 years and five months; that, therefore, was the tenor of duration assigned in the eternal decrees to the rule of the sons of Edris, and so long did their empire remain.

The extent of territory ruled by the princes of the extinguished family was from Sas Alacsa to Medina Wahran; the capital thereof was the city of Fez, and at a later period, Medina Biserta. The dominions of the Beni Edris were placed, as it were, in the heart of two powerful dynasties, which surrounded them from east to west, and from west to east. These were the Beni Obeid, lords of Africa, Barca, and Egypt, who were on the east, and the Beni Omeyas, lords of Spain and Almagreb, who were their neighbours on the west. For this cause the house of Edris lived in almost perpetual wars and disquietudes, being now masters of nearly all Almagreb, and anon reduced to the lordship of a few fortresses only, such as Azila, Hajar Anosor, and Biserta, with the distant holds about Telencen, until at length their sovereignty concluded as hath been related. God alone is eternal: He only is the Lord of a perpetual dominion.

For the better adornment of the Aljama of Fez, the Hagib Muhamad Almanzor now commanded that an Alcoba or chapel should be erected in the centre of the great court, where the old tower had previously stood. It was constructed on columns with a cupola, on the summit of which was placed a talisman, similar to that upon the cupola of the chapel of the Mihrab. This talisman was of

a kind which the ancients well knew how to make, and resembled those formed in the time of the Xiyei: it was raised on a bar of iron fixed into the centre of the cupola.

These talismans were made by the ancients for various purposes, but this one was of that kind called *Alfar*, or of the Rat; and after it had been placed in its destined position, there never was any rat found in the *Aljama*; for if by chance one of those animals did run in, it could not remain, but died at once, as was soon afterwards discovered in each case that occurred. There was besides another talisman, called the *Acrab* or that of the Scorpion, and by the means of that one, all scorpions were prevented from entering the *Aljama*; nor was there one ever seen there. Of these facts there are many credible witnesses, as, for example, the *Alfagui Aben Harnu*. The talisman, which was placed on the column of pale yellow-coloured metal, had the form of a *Haya* or Serpent, and no serpent was ever known to enter the *Aljama*.

All knowledge of this kind is the gift of the *genii*.

There were many works executed by the command of *Almudafar Abdelmelic*, the son of *Almanzor*; among others, was the hospital, which he caused to be supplied with pure water for drinking, by means of a magnificent aqueduct, bringing the stream from the *Wadilhassan*, which runs without the city at the iron gate. He likewise commanded that an *Alminbar* or pulpit should be prepared for the *Aljama*, and the material of this was ebony, richly carved and adorned with costly workmanship. To the *Alminbar* was appended the following inscription:—

“In the name of God the Clement, the Merciful.

“May God bless *Muhamad*, and all the followers that he hath given him, with a perfect felicity.

“This work hath been executed by command of the victorious Caliph, the Sword of Islam, the servant of Allah, *Hixem Ben Alhakem El Muyad Billah*, whose days may God prolong, and by the hands of his Hagib, *Abdelmelic Almudafar*, son of *Muhamad Almanzor Ben Abi Amer*. May God the Highest maintain his prosperity. The work was completed in the moon of *Giumada Postrera*, and the year 375.

The affairs of Almagreb having been thus quietly settled, Muhamad Almanzor renewed his incursions on the territory of Gallicia, even before the year 375 had closed. He devastated the Comarcas, laid siege to Medina Coyanca, which he took by assault, and the walls of which he caused to be destroyed; then, availing himself of the aid lent him by certain of the principal men among the Christians, who had come to him as fugitives, and who marched in his company, the Hagib, eager to profit by the internal disorders of the country, advanced even to the Marismas or marshy plains of Gallicia, and plundered the church of Zacum, wherein he found treasures innumerable, of all which he made prey.

In the course of that autumn Muhamad Almanzor cut up and laid waste the lands of Nahara, and penetrated into the Albaskense mountains. On his return he chastised the people of Uxama, Alcoba, and Atincia, who had risen in revolt, and repaired to Cordova once more. When all this was done, it was found that his people were overloaded with the immense amount of their booty.

It was on this occasion that the learned man and accomplished poet, Zeyadata Ben Aly, presented to the Hagib his book called the Kiteb Alhimâm; the subject being Death, and the work consisting of verses filled with profound thought, expressed in singularly fine language.

At this time Almanzor appointed Ahmed Ben Hakem Ben Muhamad El Ameri, known as Aben Lebâna of Cordova, to be Cadi of Toledo. He had previously been Wali Xuri of the capital, and was a man of much reputation for learning as well as integrity. The Hagib bestowed his former office on Ahmed Ben Abdelaziz Ben Fareg Ben Abi El Habeb, also a Cordovan of great erudition, and formerly the preceptor of his son Abdelmelic Almudafar.

In the same year of 375, Muhamad Almanzor, receiving intelligence to the effect that Balkim Ben Teiri had made an irruption upon the territory of Almagreb, at once commanded that the General Ascaleha should depart for that country with a force composed in part of Andalusians, but the remainder being natives of Africa. Arrived at Medina Fez, they besieged that city, and having taken it, the Chotba, or public prayer, for the Omeyas of Spain, which had been

interrupted by the pretensions of the Zeiries of Sanhaga, was once again made in the mosques.

Yet the whole of the city was not brought into subjection, seeing that Muhamad Ben Omar of Mekinez still remained in the quarter of the Alcairvanes, which he held for the Obeides, and ruled as their Amil: nor was it until the following year that the troops of Andalusia succeeded in obtaining possession of that quarter.

CHAP. XCIX.—OF THE NUPTIALS OF THE SON OF ALMANZOR, AND OF CERTAIN EVENTS IN ALMAGREB.

In the beginning of the year 376, there came to Andalusia a man who was much renowned for his learning, and had on that account been invited by the Hagib Muhamad Almanzor to read in the Aljama of Cordova. This was Ahmed Ben Aly Arabei El Begani, to whom Almanzor entrusted the education of his son Abderahman, and soon afterwards made him Cadi,—Ahmed being then in the thirty-sixth year of his age.

In the spring of this year the nuptials of Abdelmelic Almudafar, son of the Hagib Muhamad Almanzor, with Habiba, daughter of Abdallah Ben Yahye Ben Abi Amer, were solemnized in Cordova, as were those of Boriha, who was the daughter of Almanzor. There were great feastings and public rejoicings on that occasion: the wedding festival was held in the beautiful gardens of the Almunia called Alameria, and situated close to the Alcazars of the Zahriya, those gardens having been presented by King Hixem to his Hagib Almanzor when the latter went to ask his permission to celebrate these nuptials therein.

All the nobles of Cordova took part in the rejoicings made on that occasion. The graceful bride was conducted in triumph through the principal streets of the city, being accompanied by all the damsels belonging to such houses as were friends of the family: the train was preceded and followed by the Cadi and the witnesses, with the principal Xeques, great lords, and noble cavaliers of the city. Arrived at the gardens, those damsels, each holding an ivory wand

inlaid with gold in her hand, stood to guard the pavilion of the bride all the day, and at nightfall, the bridegroom, attended by a large number of noble youths, belonging to his family and those of the friends of his house, approached the entrance of the same, protected by the gilded swords of his attendant followers, when, despite the feigned defence made by the damsels, he succeeded in forcing the entrance.

The gardens were splendidly illuminated: amidst all the groves, around every fountain, and in the barks on the crystal lakes, by which they were beautified, delightful music sounded through the night, with songs, of which the praises of the newly-married pair formed the subject: these songs and the music endured all night, as hath been said, nor ceased until the hour of dawn, the rejoicings continuing throughout the whole of the following day.

Among the verses sung by the damsels on this occasion, those most applauded were the Canzonets written by Abu Hafs Ben Ascaleha, and by Abu Taher El Esturconi.

Precious gifts of rich vestments and costly arms were distributed by the Hagib Muhamad Almanzor among his guards, at the celebration of those nuptials, and he gave large alms to the poor of the Zawiyas:* he married many orphan-girls of his Aljama likewise, endowing them with suitable dowries; and made handsome presents to the men of genius, by whom his son and grand-daughter, the bridegroom and bride of that auspicious day, had been celebrated in verse. A more brilliant festivity than this was never seen in Cordova, nor had there ever been any walimas or nuptial-feasts of greater magnificence.

In the moon Xaban of the year 376, Yahye Ben Malic Ben Ayadh, coming forth from the Aljama of Cordova, after the prayer of nightfall, and being accompanied by several of his friends, proceeded towards his own house, where having arrived, they all entered into the spacious court, and seated themselves amidst the stately orange-trees and jasmines by which it was surrounded. While

* The Zawiyas were hospitals for professed beggars: each of them was governed by a Wakil, or steward, whose duty it was to superintend the maintenance and police of the institution.—*Condé*.

they were thus reposing, Yahye begged that one of them called Aben Abi Hebâb would sing for the company certain verses composed by Mungmi, which they had both heard when abiding together at Bagdad. Aben Hebâb sang them accordingly, and presently afterwards, taking his leave of Yahye, he wished him long life, with forgetfulness of the last fatal term, whereunto his friends having responded duly, and the usual compliments having been made, Aben Hebâb departed.

But he had not arrived at the end of the street in which the dwelling of Yahye stood, before he heard himself called by name, and returning to the place he had left, he found the friend to whom he had just wished long life, dead on his divan.

Yahye Ben Malic was one of the most learned as well as most generous men of those times, and was a distinguished philosopher: he had travelled much in India, in all parts of the East, in divers cities of Asia and Egypt, and in his native country of Spain. His death was lamented by all the good, and his bier was accompanied to the grave by many illustrious personages: El Jaboki, the Cadi of the Aljama, made the prayer for Yahye Ben Malic.

In Almagreb, the General Ascaleha was meanwhile occupied in the fulfilment of the commission entrusted to him by the Hagib Muhamad Almanzor, and his troops having been joined by those of Abu Bies, called El Jatût Ben Balkin El Magaravi, they proceeded in company to Fez, where they obtained possession of that half of the city which had still held out,—the quarter of the Alcairvanes, namely; its governor, Muhamad Ben Ainer, of Mekinez, having first been slain fighting in defence of its gates. The Andalusians then caused King Hixem Ben Alhakem to be proclaimed sovereign, and to avoid angering those troops, Jatût Ben Balkin agreed to let it be done peaceably, although not without reluctance. Intelligence of the advantage thus obtained was then sent to Cordova, where it was celebrated with much rejoicing.

The following year brought a grievous plague of locusts on all the land of Almagreb. In the first months of that year the lord of the Zenete Cabilas, Zeiri Ben Atia El Ma-

garavi, called also El Chazeri, came to Fez, where he was received by Ascaleha and Abu Bies, called Jatût Ben Balkin El Magaravi.

Cruel wars were meanwhile raging in the province of Africa between Abulbehar Ben Zeiri Ben Menad, of Sahnaga, and his nephew, Mansur Ben Balkin, Lord of Tunis; for the latter, abandoning the party of Spain, and separating himself from that friendship which his father had accepted from the Hagib Muhamad Almanzor, had proclaimed the Obeida sovereigns in all his states; whereupon Abulbehar had entered those provinces, and subjugating the towns, had caused the Omeyas of Spain to be proclaimed from every Alminbar. That general also took possession of the city of Melhadia, with others of the district of Zaub; and in each he commanded that the Chotba should be made for King Hixem, which was done accordingly; nor there only, but in all the provinces of Africa and Almagreb.

This intelligence was despatched without delay to Cordova, and was celebrated there in like manner with much rejoicing, the Hagib Almanzor sending to Abulbehar the title of Ameer for all the provinces he held in his power, with a present of beautiful horses, to which he added the sword and vestments of an Ameer, all of the most costly workmanship, and adorned with very precious ornaments.

But scarcely had Abulbehar received these titles, when he changed his allegiance, and, without any known cause or conceivable motive, declared himself to be under the protection of the Obeidas, to whom he proffered his obedience, and forbade the Chotba for King Hixem to be any longer made in the mosques.

When the Hagib Muhamad Almanzor was made acquainted with the perfidious levity of which Abulbehar Ben Zeiri had thus given proof, he wrote letters in all haste to Zeiri Ben Atia, charging him to take vengeance for those acts of contempt, and authorizing him to occupy and hold possession of all the provinces, whether in Africa or Zaub, of which Abulbehar then had command. To this Zeiri made reply, declaring that he would make a cruel war on Abulbehar, and would not cease from the same until he had despoiled that changeling both of state and life.

The Hagib himself was meanwhile invading Castile and Galicia; he destroyed Oxma, burnt Alcoba to the ground, and, returning by Atincia, demolished the walls of that city.

In these campaigns Muhamad Almanzor was accompanied by the two most eminent men of genius at that time in Spain,—these were Abu Amer Ahmed Ben Derag El Castali of Cazalla, who was Alchatib of the Divan to the Ata, or treasury of war; and Abu Meruan Abdelmelic Ben Edris, who was known as Aben Harizi.

In the year 378, Abderahman Almudafar, the son of Almanzor, repaired to the frontiers of eastern Spain, and attacking the people of Afranc, who had descended from their mountains in great numbers, he defeated them with heavy loss on their side. Having assured the tranquillity of the frontier, he then returned to Cordova, loaded with riches, seeing that the spoil made had been enormous. On that march the general was accompanied by Muhamad Ben Abi Husam of Tadmir, a virtuous man of austere life, who had travelled long and extensively in Asia, Africa, and other parts.

In the year following, the Hagib Almanzor once more directed his arms against the frontier of Galicia, and occupied Medina Colimbria. He then proceeded to Santyac, which he also took, and razed the walls thereof to their foundations. Many captives and much spoil were taken on that occasion also; and Muhamad returned to Cordova in triumph, paying visits to the cities of Talavera and Toledo on his way thither.

Nor had Zeiri Ben Atia remained idle in Africa. With his troops of the Zenete Cabilas, and other tribes from Barbary, he joined the Andalusian forces, and proceeded to march against Abulbehar Ben Zeiri; but the latter did not venture to wait his approach, and constantly flying before him, took shelter at length with his nephew, Mansur Ben Balkin, with whom but a short time before he had been waging a war of extermination, but to whose hands he now abandoned all his rights, and resigned the defence of his states.

Aben Atia was meanwhile so fortunate in that campaign as to gain early possession of Medina Telencen and all its

dependencies ; after which, he soon made himself master of the territories which had been the lordship of Abulbehar, thus extending his states from Sas Alacsa to Zaub, and beyond the confines of Almagreb. He then despatched Forenicos or couriers with intelligence of these events to the Hagib Muhamad Almanzor ; and soon after this news of victory, he likewise sent Muhamad very costly presents, which arrived in Spain towards the close of the year. Among other objects composing that magnificent gift, were a hundred generous* horses of noble race ; fifty large camels for the transport of baggage : a thousand lances of the fabric of Lamta, a great quantity of beautifully made bows, with an equally large supply of handsome quivers, filled with carefully pointed arrows, scimitars, and other weapons of the finest temper, likewise made part of that rich present. To these things were added several giraffes, with other wild beasts and rare birds from Lybia, the deserts of Lamta, and other regions, as were many sumpter mules laden with bales of delicate cloths, woven of the finest wool and exquisitely embroidered, and a thousand loads of dried fruits, all of different kinds and the most carefully selected qualities.

All these things gratified Almanzor very highly ; and the Hagib wrote to Zeiri Ben Atia, thanking him on his own part and in the name of the King Hixem Ben Alhakem. He also renewed the compact of protection previously made with Zeiri Ben Atia, attaching no other conditions thereto save only those of obedience and respect. These presents did not reach Cordova from the coast until the commencement of the year 381, the day of their arrival happening to be one when there was a great festival held in the city.

During this year, one of the principal cavaliers of Andalusia, Abu Abdallah Ben Abed, departed from Seville and repaired to the East, taking in his company Said Ben Baxie of Cordova, called Abu Othman, a very learned and religious man, whose object it was to perform this pilgrimage to the holy houses, and who in the course of that peregrina-

* Let the English reader accept the original expression of the Arabic writer in this case, and the rather as he will admit that the epithet is often less appropriately bestowed.

nation held intercourse with all the most erudite masters of the East. Both these cavaliers were constant frequenters of those academical conferences which were held in the house of the Hagib Muhamad Almanzor, and the president of which was the accomplished Ibrahim Ben Nazor, El Saracusti, or, as we should say, of Saragossa. It was he who proposed the various subjects to be discussed in those assemblies, and held the principal part therein. His contemporaries and those of that age called him Malic Ben Anas. He was one of the most learned Mufties of the Aljama of Cordova.

On a certain Saturday in that same year, and it was the twelfth day of the moon Ramazan, Said Ben Othman Ben Meruan El Coraixi, known as Aben Bolita, presented to the Hagib Muhamad Almanzor, a Casida, or long composition of very elegant verses, written in his praise, the subject being the past campaigns and brilliant victories of that leader. The members of the Academy read it that day in one of those assemblies before alluded to, with great applause from all present. The poem contained a hundred verses; and the following day Almanzor presented Said Ben Othman with three hundred doubloons of gold, which were sent to his house in purses wrapped in cloth of silver.

The fame enjoyed by the learned men of Spain, and more particularly those of Cordova, having extended into other countries, many travellers from all lands were attracted thereby, and came not only from Egypt, Africa, Syria, the Iraks and Persia, but from the country of Roum, from Afrane, and from Galicia. In the year preceding 380, there came to Cordova Said Ben Hassan El Rebai, known as Abulola, a man distinguished for his knowledge of languages, and learned in all other sciences. He was a native of Diar Musul, had studied in Bagdad, and was considered to be one of the best poets of his time. Charitable and humane, Said Ben Hassan was remarked for the grace of his demeanour and his affability of manners; the Hagib Almanzor honoured him greatly, and loaded him with benefits, assigning him his appointments from the fund destined to the service of the learned. But this income did not suffice him, because the disposition of Said Ben Hassan was to give freely, and he was of expensive

habits. It is even said that this Abulola proved himself not a little eager for gifts, and sufficiently astute in the practice of obtaining such by his verse and the graces of his manner; nor did he ever lose an occasion for procuring favours and rewards.

One day the crafty Rebai entered the Maglisa of Almanzor clothed in a worn-out mantle, so thin and dilapidated that it permitted the vestments beneath to be seen, although the day was one of more than common importance, when a large concourse of the learned and distinguished persons composing those assemblies was expected. "How is this, Abulola?" enquired the Hagib, perceiving him to present himself in that unseemly plight. "This garment that thou seest," replied Said Ben Hassan, in a plaintive and humble tone, "was the gift of our sovereign, whom God preserve; and as I have no gala dress more valuable than this—may God reward the giver,—so I have put it on." "Thou hast done well," replied Almanzor. "But, to the end that a mantle so precious may not be worn out by too frequent service, to-morrow I will take care to send thee other vestments for festal occasions, and thou canst then preserve this as it merits."

This learned man dedicated many books to the Hagib Muhamad Almanzor; as, for example, the Kiteb l'usus, or book of topazes; the Nueder Welgarib, an exposition of the work of Abu Aly El Cali, the "Book of the Proverbs and Fables," one called "A Treatise on the Deeps," and another on Military Tactics, which last pleased the Hagib greatly. There were besides others of considerable merit. Said Ben Hassan was remarkable for his promptness in reply. He gave himself little trouble as to the truth or correctness of what he said, but uttered the words that first came to his lips. We find it related of him that he one day entered the palace to pay a visit to Almanzor at a moment when the Hagib held in his hands a work on the laying out and cultivation of gardens, which had just been presented to him by Mabroman Ben Boreid, the Amil of a certain town in Spain, but which was at some distance from the capital. In this work, there is mention of the Calab and the Tarbil, which are names or terms indicating the inequalities of the ground before it has been

sown. When Said Ben Hassan appeared, the Hagib said to him, "Abulola!" and he made answer: "Labaika ye mulena"—"What wills my lord?" Then enquired Almanzor and said: "Among the many books that pass through thy hands, hast thou seen that of the Cûelib and the Rûelib of Mabroman Ben Boreid?" To which Said Ben Hassan replied: "Yes, my lord, I saw it at Bagdad, in the copy of Abu Becri Ben Daweid. It was in letters like the foot of the ant, had such and such figures upon the sides, and contained so and so, this thing and that." Whereupon the Hagib exclaimed: "Dost thou not shame thyself, Abulola, to lie thus! This book hath just been written in such a place by such an author, and treats of so and so." But Abulola still maintained that although he could not deny the truth of all that had been advanced by the Hagib, yet that what he had himself said was none the less true. This Said Ben Hassan was Alchatib, or preacher, in the mosque of the Aljama Azahira of Cordova.

Zeiri Ben Atia had meanwhile made good his seat in Fez, where he had established many of his friends and partizans, while to others he assigned possessions in the Comarca, where he settled many of his servants and followers. In the year 382, he received letters from the Hagib Muhamad Almanzor, enjoining him to repair to the capital, the King Hixem Ben Alhakem El Muyad Billah having appointed him to be Wali of Cordova. Without loss of time, Ben Atia then put himself on the way, leaving his son Almaan to manage the affairs of government in his place, and commanding him to fix his residence at Tolencen. Zeiri likewise made Abderahman Ben Abdelkerim Ben Thalaba, Sahib of the Barrio or quarter of the Andalusians; while he appointed Aly Ben Muhamad Casim Ben Aly Ben Cusûs to hold the same office in that of the Alcairvanes. As Cadi of both quarters, he named the learned Alfaqui, Abu Muhamad Casim Ben Amer, El Lesdi.

These matters all arranged, Zeiri Ben Atia departed for Cordova, taking with him many valuables and presents of great cost, such as jewels, fine furniture, and other rarities. He furthermore loaded many beasts of burthen with the strange birds added by his liberal hand to that present, and of which there were some that had been taught to speak

the tongues of Barbary, the Algarabia,* and others. Lions, panthers, and zebras, in great cages of iron, with camels and civet cats, were among the objects transported into Spain by Zeiri Ben Atia, as were also dates of very rare kinds, such as those of Azarfan, with nuts as large as great goblets. He had in his company three hundred cavaliers of his family and kindred, with a train of three hundred esquires all carefully selected for that honour.

When Muhamad Almanzor was made acquainted with the approach of Zeiri Ben Atia, he prepared for him a very pompous reception, and lodged him in the Alcazar of the Hagib Giafar. King Hixem received him with much distinction, granting him honours and immunities of the most distinguished favour. The Hagib Muhamad had commanded that the title of Vizier Quibir should be conferred on the guest, and all seemed proceeding most amicably. Yet in the midst of all these compliments and delicate exchanges of courtesy, there grew up offence and enmity between Almanzor and Ben Atia, who could indeed not fail to see each other with unfriendly eyes, since it was not in the nature of things that two men so great and so proud could live in contact with any hope of union.

No long time had elapsed, therefore, before Zeiri Ben Atia requested permission from the King Hixem El Muyad Billah to return to Africa, whence he had received notices which caused him to hasten his departure. The king dismissed him to his Amilia accordingly, and, at parting, the Hagib Almanzor required him to renew those compacts of homage for the states of Magreb to which Beni Atia had previously agreed, as also for whatever else he had acquired in those provinces.

When Zeiri Ben Atia had crossed the sea and landed in the territory of Tangier, he laid his hand on his brow and said, "At length I comprehend for what reason Muhamad Almanzor invited me to Cordova;" and when, in the making of the Chotba, there were some who named him as the

* A sort of mixed language spoken at the period in question in all the provinces of Spain—a kind of *Lingua Franca*. The word has become obsolete, but may still be heard occasionally. It now means "jargon."—*Tr.*

Vizier Quibir, which was the title given to him in the capital, he exclaimed, "Not Vizier! by Allah, not Vizier! but Ameer, and Son of Ameer:" nor did he take pains to conceal that he had returned malcontent with the Hagib, but declared openly that his voyage had proved Muhamad Almanzor to be unlike what fame had reported of him.

During the absence of Zeiri in Spain, affairs in Africa had not remained as he had left them. The Ameer Jadoc Ben Jali El Yaferini had invaded his territories with a powerful army, had entered Fez by surprise, and, although opposed by those of the Andalusian Quarter, had forced the gates of that Barrio, and during the moon Dylcada, in the year 382, had obtained possession of the whole city. With this fact Zeiri Ben Atia was made acquainted on his landing in Tangiers, and he forthwith prepared to march against the invader. Many battles were then fought between them, with varying fortune, for Jadoc Ben Jali was an able general, as well as a brave man; he was, besides, incited by the desire to avenge his father's death, and his troops, who were of the Cabilas of Yafur, were exceedingly valiant and well inured to war. Zeiri prevailed in the end, nevertheless: he defeated the forces of Jador, and meeting himself in the mêlée, he slew him and cut off his head, which he sent to the Hagib Muhamad Almanzor, who was then at Cordova, at the commencement of the year 382. After this victory, Zeiri Ben Atia remained the undisputed master of almost all Magreb, and feared nobody.

In the year 382, and at nightfall of Thursday the third day of the moon Xaval, a poetical tournament or controversy was held in the Academy of Humanities, which, as we have said, was accustomed to assemble in the house of the Hagib Muhamad Almanzor; and on that occasion many excellent compositions in verse were read, to the great satisfaction of the hearers. The subject of some among these productions was the eulogy of King Hixem El Muyad Billah, and of his Hagib Muhamad Almanzor,—those most applauded being the works of the Secretary Ahmed Ben Derag El Casteli, and those of the Vizier Alchatib, Abdelmelic Ben Edris of Algezira, who was called Abu Meruan. There likewise appeared on that occasion the renowned poet, Muhamad Ben Elisai, a man greatly favoured by Almanzor,

and who had in his house a garden of rose-trees which yielded roses in every month of the year; these he sent to the Hagib as a tribute, with many subtle conceits and elegant compliments. The General Jali Ben Ahmed Ben Jali was accustomed to offer a similar act of courtesy to Almanzor; and on one occasion the flowers he sent were accompanied by the following verses:—

“When from my garden fair I send thee roses
Blooming, whate’er the season, all admire
That marvel, and demand if flowery Spring
Her steps hath quickened. “No,” they quick reply,
The grateful multitude, “still hold their pace,
The circling seasons, and this miracle
That wakes our wonder, scarce should cause us marvel.
It comes because the power of Great Almanzor
Turns all our life to Spring!”

Another of those who distinguished themselves in that assembly was the learned Ibrahim Ben Muhamad El Axarafi, so called from the place of his birth, seeing that he was born in the Axarafe, on the heights of the Senorio in Seville. He was Achatib, or preacher, of the Aljama in his native place, but had been invited to Cordova by the Hagib Almanzor. His excellence as a preacher was equal to his ability as a poet. With these eminent men came also Ismael Ben Abderahman, a very learned Cordovan, who had been long in Egypt, but now lived in his native city, where he had fixed his dwelling in the neighbourhood of the Cadi Abulabas Ben Dekuen.

The prize given by the Hagib Muhamad to the successful competitors in these trials of poetical skill, was one hundred gold doubloons, which he had distributed at given times from the first establishment of the academy. He furthermore caused a collection to be made of such poems as he considered to be of merit.

In the numerous campaigns and expeditions made by the Hagib, it was his custom to take with him two or three of these active spirits, and those men were wont to compose their verses beneath the shade of the warlike pavilion, describing the battles delivered, and the various circumstances of each conquest, in graceful song. Thus, to Galicia and the siege of Santyac, Muhamad Almanzor took

Aben Derag and Abdelmelic El Harizi, poets who emulated each other in the fulness of thought, facility of expression, and elegant polish of their verse.

There was even one occasion wherein El Harizi, on the very night succeeding a great battle, had presented himself to the Hagib with his completed composition, and Almanzor, turning to Aben Derag, enquired of him—"And thou, Aben Derag, couldst thou do the same?" whereupon, between that hour and the dawn of morning, the latter also produced a description of the battle, with that of the march which had preceded it, the country through which the army had passed, and the spot whereon the combat had taken place,—every incident, in short,—even to the most minute; a task which he accomplished to the admiration of all who understood the matter, and who exclaimed in their gladness, "We need not yield to any people when good poets are the question, for, with only our Harizi and Aben Derag, we may safely compete with Habib and Motenabi."

Another distinguished member of this Academy, and one greatly favoured by the Hagib Almanzor, was Ibrahim Ben Edris El Olui Alhasani El Munios, called Mâbal. He produced an admirable composition in eulogy of Ben Hudheil Aben Razia, the lord of certain fortresses in the East, which were called the Santamaria of Aben Razia, who was a particular friend of Muhamad Almanzor.

About this time one of the most brilliant spirits in Spain, Casim Ben Mohamad El Meruani namely, known as El Xibenisi, from the name of his country, had been detained some time in prison by the Cadilcoda; whereupon, becoming wearied of that long detention, Casim wrote a supplication to the Hagib Muhamad, and this being composed in verses of much elegance, did in effect procure him the desired deliverance.

CHAP. C.—OF THE INCURSION MADE BY ALMANZOR ON THE TERRITORIES OF GALLICIA, AND THE CAPTIVITY OF THE KING GARCIA.

IN the first opening of the spring of the year 384, the Hagib Almanzor assembled his banners of Andalusia, Merida, and

Toledo, and departed with a mighty host of cavalry for the frontiers of Gallicia. He defeated the Christian troops opposing his passage, destroyed the fortresses of the Infidels, and burnt their churches; to say nothing of the large spoils which he took from their towns, and the vast number of the captives whom he bore away, young men and maidens alike.

Having gained the Marismas or marshy plains of Gallicia and Bortecala, Muhamad Almanzor attacked the church of Santyac, which he burnt; but the Christians had themselves despoiled that temple of its riches, and for this the Hagib destroyed the neighbouring city, commanding, moreover, that the bells of the church, which the Infidels had not removed, should be taken to Cordova. He then returned to the capital, which he entered in triumph, preceded by four thousand captives—youths and damsels. The day was one of great festivity in the city of Cordova; and the bells which Almanzor had brought with him were given by him to the Aljama, where they were assigned a place in the court of the building.

At the Easter of the Victims in this year, the Toleic Maron Ben Abderahman was set at liberty, having been in prison sixteen years, according to the sentence pronounced on him for the slaying of his father, as before related. This event was celebrated in numerous verses by the poets of Andalusia; among others, by Nafe Ben Riadhi, of Algezira, and Abderahman Ben Xablac El Hadrami, of Seville, a competitor, in the elegance of his metre, with the renowned Abu Amar Jusuf Ben Harun El Ramedî. This erudite and ingenious Xablac, whom some call Xibrac, is the author who relates of himself the following circumstance as having taken place when he was very old, and he lived, in effect, to a very great age, departing from life but a short time before the accession of the Beni Hamud. He tells us, then, that being in a dream, he beheld himself seated in a Machora, or cemetery, of very great beauty,—rich in flowers, and shaded by trees of abundant leaf and very green, beneath which El Xablac thought he was laid, amidst bright and odoriferous blossoms. In that cemetery was a sepulchre surrounded by closely planted cypresses and myrtles, amidst which reposed a large company, who were drinking and making much noise, as they reclined on the delicate flowers

and verdant grass. Many gave evidence, in fact, of so extravagant a gladness, that Xablac reproved them, as he thought, for their unbecoming mirth, saying to them, "Is it thus that you obey the wise admonitions? By Allah! profane not by these outcries the honourable place of graves." To which they replied, "Dost thou, then, not know whose grave it is that we surround?" And he made answer, saying that he did not know.

Then said those revellers, "This sepulchre is the resting-place of Abu Aly El Hakem Alhasan Ben Heni, and from the myrtles which overshadow this grave thou shalt not depart, until thou hast offered to him thy eulogy."

"Then it was," adds the learned Xablac, "that I made certain verses which have since become sufficiently known."

In the year 385, the Hagib Muhamad Almanzor departed from Cordova to invade the territory of the Christians on the eastern frontier; he was accompanied on that occasion by the Vizier Abdelmelic Abu Meruan, a man wise in counsel and of great experience: Abulola of Mosul, and other illustrious captains, were also of his company. Almanzor's march to the frontier was performed with so much celerity, that before the Christians were made aware of his having left Cordova, he was already on their lands. But the Christians of the Albaskense Mountains and those of Galicia had united their forces, and were assembling an innumerable multitude, which was led by Garcia Ben Sancho,* King of the Christians of the mountains, a very good cavalier.

It was not the intention of the Christians, as it would appear, to give immediate battle to the Moslemah, but only to impede their march and give time for the arrival of all the troops they expected; but they were attacked without delay by the cavalry of Almanzor, and many sanguinary skirmishes were fought with equal obstinacy on both sides. At length the Christians, having taken up a position in which they had the advantage of being sheltered by certain heights, the Hagib commanded his cavalry to retire, hoping

* In our chronicles this "Garcia Ben Sancho" is called the Conde Garcia Fernandez: "in era 1033, præserunt Mauri Conde Garcia Fernandiz, et fuit obitus ejus die 2, feriæ 4, Kal. Aug." These dates are exact, and are confirmed by the Arabic authorities.—*Conde*.

that the enemy would thus be tempted to descend into the plain.

In the evening of this day, Alhassan Said, of Bagdad, presented a stag bound with cords to Muhamad Almanzor, with a copy of verses, wherein he predicted to him the approach of victory; these were as follows:—

“Thou! my sole refuge, when pale fears assail me—
Thou! my sure aid in every hour of peril—
Thou! shelter of the desolate:—thine arm
Hath been my shield: on me thy hand hath poured
Blessings abundant as the rain that falls
Brightening the meads to verdure, and awaking
Blossom and plant in each rejoicing field.

And God shall be thine aid—the powers of Heaven
Shall combat with thy bands; the misbeliever
Casting before thee prone. Yet had mine eyes
Not seen thy valour, and the power supreme
Of thine all-conquering genius, this faint heart
Now leaping in my bosom, must have quailed
Before the coming perils. But I see thee!
I see thee raging through yon grove of pines,
Where, as two leopards springing on one pard,
The warriors rush to battle. Thou, great lord,
Dost banish all my fear. But for thine arm,
I, wretched creature, was the proud one's prey.
That arm of might hath saved me. Wherefore now
Permit the servant by thy grace advanced
To walk beneath thy shield, this night to offer
The stag thus bound, and not without a cause.

For this is Garcia's self. Here in these bands
Hast thou the son of Sancho!—if mine eyes
Have looked aright,—if Heaven their augury
Hath owned,—then this is Garcia. With the dawn,
That soon shall brighten, comes for us the joy
Of a great day—for thee the pride of conquest.

Be gracious to thy servant; be his offering
Accepted, and his pains are overpaid.
Confusion to thy foes, renowned Almanzor!
Soon on their heads devoted mayst thou pour
The arrows of thy wrath, as rushing rain-clouds
Fall fast and heavily upon the plains.

Almanzor accepted the stag and the verses with infinite pleasure, and rejoiced much as he discoursed with his generals that night on the facility with which the prophecy of Said Abulola might be fulfilled. He decided on the various dispositions to be made with his captains, and directed all the arrangements for the coming day. When the dawn appeared, he made his Azala, or early prayer, reviewed the warriors arrayed under the various banners of his host, and commanded that the trumpets and Anafires should give the signal for battle.

The strife commenced accordingly, with equal resolution on the part of both armies, and fearful cries of war on either side. The air was filled with a whirlwind of arrows, and thick clouds of dust arose to the skies. The leaders of the van made a show of retreating, as had been agreed on, and appeared to be yielding ground, in spite of themselves, to the might of the enemy. Then the Christians, animated by that semblance of advantage, came down from their acclivities as do impetuous torrents that descend to the plains, and their fearful vociferations caused the valleys to resound. But when the advance of the Moslemah seemed to have been thrown into disorder, and the centre appeared on the point of giving way to its terrors in all the confusion of flight, the cavalry of the rear-guard, and that of the wings of the Moslemah army, took the Christians in flank and attacked them on both sides.

The generals and cavaliers of the Infidel host fought with astonishing valour; but the courage of the multitude sinking before that unexpected onslaught, the great mass of their forces became dismayed, and, falling into disorder, the troops began to fly on all sides, pursued by the Moslemah cavalry, which made a cruel carnage among them. The number of captives taken was also very great, but was more remarkable for the quality and importance of the persons composing a large portion of those captured, than for the vast amount of the common people.

And now was seen a strange thing; for, as if Said Abulola had by his science attained to the knowledge of what the Great and Mighty God had determined in the eternal decrees of His providence, that which he had described in

his poetical augury came to pass, and his prophecy was accomplished.

Among the principal cavaliers taken captive was the King of the Christians, Garcia Ben Sancho, but he was so grievously wounded that he died a few days after the battle, notwithstanding all the cures and medicaments of the Leeches who were charged by Muhamad Almanzor to do everything which their science permitted for his cure. This memorable engagement took place on the second day of Rebie Postreca in the year 385.*

The Hagib commanded that the body of King Garcia should be placed in a richly decorated coffin, which he then wrapped in a covering of cloth of scarlet and gold, very precious. This, filled with fine aromas, he was about to send to the Christian subjects of the dead monarch, when certain cavaliers of his people arrived in the camp with great riches to ransom the body of their king; but of all those costly presents Almanzor would receive nothing.

In the moon Xawal of the same year 385, the Hagib Muhamad defeated the Christians once more; and after that engagement, the King Bermond of Galicia† sent messengers and letters bearing proposals of peace to Almanzor, who commanded Ayub Ben Amer of Gezira Saltis to return with the Christian envoys for the purpose of treating with their king, Bermond, on the part of the Moslemah.

The rains having then commenced, prevented the Hagib from continuing his enterprise, and he returned to Cordova, where he was received with great rejoicings.

When Ayûb Ben Amer arrived in the capital with the conditions of peace to which he had agreed with King Bermond of Galicia, the Hagib Muhamad Almanzor was much displeased to find that he had suffered the infidels to gain great advantages, and, conceiving certain suspicions against Ayûb, he cast him into prison: nor could the Hagib ever be prevailed on to grant him his liberty while he lived; and it was not until after the death of Muhamad Almanzor that Ben Amer was released from his imprisonment by Abdelmelic his son.

* A.D. 995.

† Bermudo II. of Leon.—*Coll.* ✓

CHAP. CL.—OF VARIOUS EVENTS THAT NOW TOOK PLACE IN SPAIN
AND AFRICA.

THE friendship and good intelligence apparently existing between Zeir Ben Atia and the Hagib Muhamad Almanzor was maintained by the former in public, until the time when, inflated by his great increase of power, he began to make manifest the hatred which he had long concealed in his heart. He built and fortified the city of Wahda, surrounding it with walls, and furnishing its gates with towers; he also built a castle in the manner of a fortress. This city he peopled with inhabitants chosen from such of his people as he believed to be most devoted to his interests; and, having constituted the place a regal abode and the capital of his states, the site of it being nearly in the centre of the same, he placed in it all his riches and treasures.

In the moon Regeb of the year 384, Zeir Ben Atia completed the walls of his city; and although he had some differences with the Hagib Almanzor even while occupied with that work, yet he dissembled the anger he felt until the year 386, when Almanzor was informed that he had commanded his name to be omitted from the public prayer, and would scarcely suffer the mention of that of Hixem El Muyad Billah. It was furthermore made known to the Hagib that Zeir Ben Atia, showing no respect to the king, had despoiled of their governments not a few among those who had been appointed by Muhamad Almanzor, and had sent them to Cepta. Hearing these things, the Hagib then commanded the general Wadha El Feti to march against Ben Atia, and that leader set forth accordingly, with a very large force of foot and horse.

In the moon Safar of the year 387, the Hagib Almanzor made an irruption on the territory of Alava, and on that occasion he divided all the booty and captives taken among his troops, not excepting even the fifth that appertained to the king; Hixem El Muyad having authorised him to do so at his departure for that expedition, in consideration of the fact that it was undertaken during the season of cold and rains.

The forces of Wahda El Feti had meanwhile arrived at Langiers, where they were joined by some of the Cabilas

from Gomara and Sanhaga, with others belonging to the Xenetes and certain tribes of Barbary. To all these Wadha distributed money, as well as arms and vestments, departing from Tangiers with a very numerous host. Zeir Ben Atia came forth to meet him from Medina Fez, having on his part a carefully selected force; and the first engagement, a very obstinate one, was followed by others, which were also cruel combats. The two generals fought during three months with various fortune, until the host of Wadha El Feti, receiving no reinforcements, became exhausted, and, thus weakened, began to yield to the force of numbers; finally, the troops were compelled to take flight, and sought refuge in Tangiers, after having suffered very heavy loss.

Then Wadha El Feti formed his resolution, and wrote to the Hagib Muhamad Almanzor making known the condition of his affairs, and entreating that he might be at once supplied with succours of men, money, and provisions, all of which had failed him; whereupon the Hagib himself set forth from Cordova, and repaired to Algezira Alhadra. There he commanded the assembling of a large force, and sent his own son, Abdelmelic Alnudafar, therewith. The flower of the Spanish cavalry was called out for that expedition, which was joined by the principal Alcades; but Almanzor remained at Algezira, to be prepared for what might follow, and to give all the more effectual impulse to the forwarding of the succours demanded by Wadha El Feti.

When the news that Abdelmelic Alnudafar had passed the sea reached Zeir Ben Atia, he became much alarmed, and wrote to all the Zenete Cabilas, requesting aid; when there came to him people from Velad Zaub, from Telencen, Sigilmesa, Melia, and other places of the Wadi Zeneta,—emboldened by the arrival of whom, he sallied forth to seek and combat his enemies.

On his part, Abdelmelic Alnudafar left Tangiers with the troops of Andalusia, and accompanied by the General Wadha El Feti. The two hosts met at Wadi-Mena, on the confines of Tangiers, when a battle ensued of such atrocious carnage, that the like had never before been heard of. Commencing at dawn, the combatants continued the struggle throughout the whole day, and did not cease until the set of sun.

In the hottest moment of the conflict a negro youth, called Zalem, whose brother had been killed by Zeiri Ben Atia, met the latter in the combat, and seeing a good opportunity for avenging the death of his kinsman, the youth, who knew Zeiri by his insignia, came behind him and gave him three severe wounds with his Hanger or cutlass. Believing these wounds to be mortal, the negro then hastened to Abdelmelic, assuring him that he had wounded Zeiri Ben Atia to the death; whereupon that general, animating his troops with the intelligence thus received, fell with renewed vigour upon his enemies, who, being deprived of their leader, and believing him dead, were thrown into confusion and put to flight, the Andalusians pursuing them eagerly and making a fearful slaughter.

The disorder and dismay of the Zeneta forces soon attained to the royal pavilion, into which Zeiri had retired to have his wounds bound up, and the vanquished leader saw himself compelled to join the flight with some of his principal cavaliers, leaving his camp in the hands of the enemy, who seized the tents, pavilions, arms, horses, and camels, with a large provision for the wants of the army, and great flocks of cattle.

Zeiri fled, wounded as he was, until he had reached a place called the Angosturas of Wadilhaya, situated midway between two cities of Mequinez. Here he made a halt, and remained until he was joined by the nobles of his people and a large part of his fugitive army, hoping to be permitted to rest there until he should be sufficiently restored to proceed once more against Abdelmelic Almudafar. But the son of Muhamad Almanzor was not so to be thrown off; knowing whither Zeiri had fled, his opponent despatched Wadha El Feti with a picked troop of five hundred horse, and this body, falling upon the forces of Ben Atia when they were least expecting an attack, compelled them to recommence the struggle. The battle was, as before, a well-contested one; but, although it was now night, the Andalusians fought so bravely that they once again defeated the foe, and this they did with all the more assurance, as being confident in the near vicinity of their camp and the succours held in reserve for them by Abdelmelic.

The second defeat of Zeiri Ben Atia took place in the

middle of the moon of the Blessed Ramazan, in the year 387. The carnage was very great, the larger part of Zeiri's troops remaining dead on the field, and the nobles of Magarava, who were but little short of one thousand men, being all taken prisoners.

Being informed of this last capture, Abdelmelic Almudafar commanded that all should be instantly set at liberty, and even gave them their horses and arms, that each might depart whithersoever it pleased him; but a great number of them determined to remain with him, and took service in his host.

Zeiri Ben Atia was meanwhile flying, accompanied by only a few of his people, to Medina Fez; but when he arrived at the gates of that city he found that the inhabitants had closed them against him, and refused to give him admission. The unfortunate prince then entreated that his children, and the rest of his family and household, might be sent out to him; whereupon the citizens put them forth, giving them horses and provisions for the necessities of a journey, when they all fled to the desert before Abdelmelic Almudafar, the son of Almanzor. That general was meanwhile devastating the territory of Sanhaga in his progress, and soon arrived at Medina Fez, where he was received with acclamations of triumph. His entry into the city was made on a Saturday, towards the end of the moon Xawal, in the year 387.

Abdelmelic now wrote to his father Almanzor, giving him an account of his enterprise and the victories he had obtained, when the letter was read in the Alminbar of the Great Aljama of Cordova, and in that of the Aljama of Azahra, as well as in all the principal cities of Spain, east and west, as it had now become the custom to do on the occasion of every great victory. That day the Hagib Muhamad commanded that liberty should be given to five hundred male captives of the Christians, and three hundred female slaves of that infidel race, thereby offering thanks to God for his signal mercies. He also distributed large sums to the poor, and paid the debts of many among the most honourable of the needy.

In that same year of 387 the bridge of Toledo was rebuilt, by order of Muhamad Ben Abdallah Ben Abi Amer Al-

manzor, Hagib to the Prince of the Believers, Hixem Ben Alhakem, called El Muyad Billah, the work having been performed by the hands of his servant and vizier, Chalaf Ben Muhamad Alameri. In the same year there died at that city, even Toledo, Abdelmenaum Ben Galbon, the Mocri, or Reader of the Aljama, and Ahmed Ben Sohli the Alfaqui, both natives of that place. In Medina Azahra, likewise, there departed from this life the Muti of the Aljama, Ibrahim Ben Abderahman El Tenesi, a learned and virtuous man.

Now in those days it came to pass that there was a poor widow, the mother of a robber and assassin, who was so notorious a criminal that his heavy offences had been noised about through all Andalusia; but the woman now presented herself, nevertheless, to the Hagib Muhamad Almanzor with a supplication, entreating that her son might be pardoned, and adjuring the Hagib, by the great favour at that time shown to all poor widows and orphans, to take pity upon him.

When Almanzor had read that petition he struck his forehead with the open hand, and said "Gualà!* "thou hast reminded me in good time of this evil-doer; the man must die." But instead of writing on the order, which he then gave to that effect, "Let him be crucified," the Hagib, in the distraction of the moment, and with his thoughts occupied by the mother's prayer, wrote as follows—"Let him be set free; in which form the command was taken to the vizier, whose business it was to write upon it the formula, "Be this done as commanded;" after which it was to be presented to the Sahib Xarta, Prefect of Police, when the last-named functionary saw that the sentence, confirmed by the Criminal Judge of the city, was carried into execution.

But the vizier, being well acquainted with the character of the man's crimes, and unable to believe that he was to be pardoned, sent a messenger to the Hagib Muhamad, inquiring if he had given the order in that sense; whereupon Almanzor took the paper hastily and struck out the words

* Guala! An exclamation of great emphasis, implying much emotion. It may be rendered in more than one manner, as: "Now by Heaven!" or "By Allah!" which is the rendering usually adopted by the present writer.—TR.

"Let him be set free:" but instead of replacing them by the order for death, he wrote them again by the same inadvertence, insomuch that the paper remained as before.

Surprised to find that although the Hagib had struck out those words, "Let him be set free," he had yet written them again, the vizier once more sent his messenger to Almanzor, demanding to know if he chose to have the matter concluded so, and not otherwise. The Hagib became much displeased at this second interruption, but again struck out the erroneous order.

Yet what happened? Beneath the words thus erased were written the same words, now thrice repeated; and this time the Vizier, no longer able to divine what was meant by these repeated erasures, each followed by the re-establishment of the same phrase,—this time, I say, the Vizier repaired in person to the presence of the Hagib, and laying the paper before him, he said, "Thrice hast thou now commanded the setting free of this great criminal, and that of a truth is a strange thing."

Almanzor then looked attentively at the words which he had thus three times written, and after having regarded them for some time in silence, he raised his eyes from the order before him, and spake thus: "It is so. I have written it thrice, and let him be set free; for although it was not my intention to do this, yet him whom God hath willed to be spared and given to freedom, we may not dare to crucify;" and the man was set at liberty accordingly.

To his son, Abdelmelic Almudafar, the Hagib Almanzor now wrote, giving him very wise counsels as to the manner in which he was to govern the people whom he had subjected to his rule in Africa, recommending justice and prudence in terms of great force. This letter was read in the Minbar of the Great Aljama of the Alcairvanes on the last Juma of the moon of Dylcada, and to that same paper was appended the order by which Abdelmelic Almudafar was appointed Amil of Almagreb.

In the spring of the year 388, the Hagib Muhamad sent orders for the passing over into Spain of the General Wadha El Feti with a large body of cavalry; in command

of which Almanzor proposed to send that general against the Christians ; and Abdelmelic Almudafar despatched him into Andalusia accordingly without any delay.

About the same time, the fortifications of Gebal Almina, a lofty hill to the east of Medina Cebta, were constructed, also by order of Muhamad Almanzor, who had remarked the level space upon its summit when he passed through that city, and saw that the plain there presented was well calculated for the establishment of such defences. It was, indeed, his purpose to transport the city itself to the summit of the hill ; but after his death, they could never succeed in removing the dwellers from their seats below ; and as the people thus persisted in retaining their ancient abode, the town commenced on the heights of Almina fell to ruin.

Abdelmelic meanwhile continued in Medina Fez, governing the city and state with justice and prudence, and giving cause of complaint to no man ; yet, at the end of six months, his father wrote commanding him to return to Spain, sending Iza Ben Said, Sahib Xarta of Cordova, to assume the government in his place. That ruler retained his office accordingly until the moon Safar, in the year 389, when Almanzor deprived him also of his government, confiscating all his possessions, and sending the General Wadha El Feti to govern in his stead. Iza Ben Said returned to Spain in the same year.

About this time Galib Ben Omeya Ben Galib of Moron, called Abulasi, an erudite and much renowned poet, was pacing along the shore of the Guadalquivir where that river flows by Cordova, and being in sight of the Alcazar or royal palace, his meditations resolved themselves into the following verses :—

“ Palace of royal state, proud Alcazar :
What rich delights within thy walls are found :
May thy good star preserve thee from all harm !

How many powerful monarchs have thy roofs
Seen pass beneath their splendours. Yet the stars
Now calmly look upon the silent graves
Of kings and heroes who have there abode.

Tell to the world, then,—whose admiring eyes
Look on thy seeming steadfastness—that all
Is but deceit. Say, that of earth's delights
Not one hath permanence; and bid all know
That Time holds ever on his measured course.

Yea, that we long for, as the morning sun
Brightens the scene, we shun at close of day
With trembling or disdain. Doth not all change?
Where now are thy proud lords, imperial Syria?
Where their high dwellings—columns, arches, towers;
The shining gold and azure of their halls,
Their strength and splendour?—each alike hath flown,
And scarcely now remains a trace of all
More than of some poor nest of ants, low-niched
At foot of lofty mountain. Better far
Are ye who, sheltered in your lowly vales,
Live in remote tranquillity. Seek not
The height sublime, whose giddy summit bends
Sheer o'er the precipice. Let not thy foot
Press those illusive paths that beckon upwards:
Rest thou below. For if o'er the deep valleys
The clouds gloom darkly at the break of morn,
Yet these before might of day shall flee,
Leaving the plains to calm security.

Zeiri Ben Atia had, meanwhile, arrived in the territory of Sanhaga, which he found in a state of revolt against its sovereign, Badis Ben Mansur Ben Balkin, who had been at variance with the nobles of his people from the time of his father's death. Availing himself of that occasion, Zeiri Ben Atia then sent to request assistance from the Zenete Oabilas, when a large body of cavalry instantly joined him from Magarava and other places. He then fell on the Comarcas of Sanhaga, which he subjugated, driving the troops of his opponent from the district, and proceeding to Medina Tahart, of which he took possession, as he did of other towns in the territory of Zaub. He also made himself master successively of Telencen, Xelf, and Masila; but in each of these places he took care to have the name of the King Hixem El Muyad Billah proclaimed in the streets.

Having laid siege to Medina Axiada, which was the chief of all the towns in Sanhaga, Zeiri there maintained a battle with his enemies from the dawn of morning until late in the

afternoon, when the violent exertions he made re-opened the wounds received from the Negro Zalem,—and of these he died. This event took place in the year 391.

CHAP. CII.—OF THE BATTLE OF CALAT ANOSOR, AND THE DEATH OF
THE HAGIB MUHAMAD ALMANZOR.

IN the year 390, Muhamad Almanzor marched once more on the frontier of eastern Spain, and the Christians came forth against him with a powerful host; but he attacked them without delay, and the Christian generals, who now feared him as one who held the Sword of Destiny, were again defeated and humbled by his hand. Heavy was the doom they suffered, and unhappy were the memories that he left among them of that battle of Hisn Dhervera. He devastated their lands, destroyed their fortresses, and burnt their towns;—the country which had once been a thickly peopled one was made a desert; seeing that the Infidels themselves burnt their own villages, hamlets, and dwellings of all kinds, to the end that our people might not profit by the shelter they afforded.

All these things accomplished, the Hagib Muhamad Almanzor returned to Cordova in triumph; and it was then that Ahmed Ben Bordi, called Abu Hafas, one of the most learned viziers of the capital, presented him with his poetical works, while Sulciman Ben Golghal also laid before the Hagib his book, wherein he treats of such of the physicians of Spain as had been most extensively renowned for their learning in the medical sciences.

At that time it chanced that the Vizier Hassan Ben Melic Ben Abi Obda, an elegant and accomplished poet, entered the chamber of Muhamad Almanzor to pay him a visit, when he found the Hagib holding in his hands the Proverbs of Sohal Ben Abi Galib, known as Abu Serri, a work which had been compiled and written for the Caliph Harun Raxid,—and Almanzor said to him, “I am much pleased with the elegance of this book, and enjoy its merits; but the work still requires one thing to render it complete :

it wants a good commentary." Hearing this, the vizier Hassan requested the Hagib to give him the book, and, having received the same, retired with it to his house. A week only had elapsed from that time, when he again appeared in the palace of Almanzor, to whom he now presented a learned commentary on the work of Sohal, in three hundred verses, of which he had made a beautiful copy, and this he now laid before the Hagib. Of this composition Muhamad Almanzor was accustomed to say, that the commentary of Hassan Ben Melic was the most elegant work ever written in Spain,—and the same thing was affirmed by Husein Ben Walid Abulcasim in the academies of Almanzor, where Hassan, the author of the commentary, was at that time competing in poetical improvisation with Abulola Said Ben Alhassan, and with Gehuar El Tegibi, known as Aben Floriso of Almeria.

In the year 391, there departed for the East, Abderahman Ben Cid Amon of Ucles, a disciple of Abu Othman Ben Said Ben Salem El Mageriti, so called from his native place Magerit, in the territory of Toledo; a man widely renowned in Africa, Egypt, and the Iracas, not only for his great knowledge, but for his exemplary life. Now El Taglebi of Cordova was once sojourning with Abu Othman at Medina Bagdad, and one day, the former going forth from the city, arrived at certain rustic abodes at no great distance, where he found a Saqui, or water-carrier, who held in his hand a beautifully cut and graven glass of crystal, formed with extraordinary grace, and filled with the purest and clearest water. It was then the season of roses, which had, however, but just begun, and El Taglebi, gathering some very fresh ones, placed them in that crystalline water, which looked all empurpled with the glow of the flowers as they shone through the transparency of the glass.

"Now as I was examining all this attentively," relates El Taglebi, "the water-carrier said to me, 'What art thou looking at, Mogrebi? dost thou stand thus admiring the beauty of the roses?' To which I made answer and said, 'Yea, that do I: seen thus in that crystal vase, the beauty of the roses enchants me.' 'Hear, then,' rejoined the water-carrier, 'a thought of mine concerning this flower and vase.' Whereupon he repeated the lines that follow —

'The rose! the rose! she holds the throne of flowers;
Her empire none declines:
To her the blossoms bend in all their bowers,—
Their lovely queen, the rose, supreme she shines.' "

And now, that the Christians might not have repose for a single year, the Hagib Muhamad Almanzor commanded the assemblage of a large army: cavalry from the African provinces made an important part of this force; and the first division of those troops disembarked at Algezira Alhadra, while the second was landed at Santa Maria, in Oesonoba. The governor of Santarem, in Algarva, Farhon Ben Abdallah Ben Abdelwalid, also assembled a large body of cavalry, as did the Walies of Merida and Badajos, who summoned all the banners of their territories, respectively, to take part in the conflict about to be renewed. The banners of Toledo were in like manner assembled; and in the year 392, the Hagib Muhamad Almanzor commenced his march upon the Comarcas of the Christian territories with a great and powerful host.

The report of these preparations caused a similar movement among the Infidels, and they gathered all their force to go forth against Almanzor. The Moslemah were arranged in two great divisions: the first comprising the cavalry of Andalusia, and the second that of Africa. The stream of war then poured itself over the country on each bank of the Douro, without meeting resistance at any part, and the march of the invading forces was continued along that river, even to its sources.

The Christians had meanwhile established their camp in the Comarca of Calat Anosor, and had divided their host into three great bodies, which covered the face of the country with their multitudes, as do the widely extended clouds of the locust, when they come darkening all the plains.

When the advanced guard of the Moslemah discovered the camp of the Infidels, and reported the vast extent over which the broad wings thereof were spread, the hearts of the Faithful were troubled, and they represented the same to the Hagib Muhamad Almanzor, who thereupon made a recognizance in person, and, having examined the position of the enemy, then arranged his troops for the battle.

There were some few skirmishes between the outposts that same day, but the approach of evening prevented the combatants from coming to a general engagement.

Yet in the short truce permitted to them by the shadows of night, the Moslemah generals did not venture to give themselves to repose. Anxious and doubtful, they passed the hours of darkness between fear and hope, looking up to the stars and turning their eyes ever and anon to that part of the heavens where day must soon appear. But the coming of those roseate tints which precede her arrival—the brightness of the dawn which is wont to gladden the hearts of men,—then served rather to darken the spirits of the fearful, while the clangour of the trumpets and sound of martial instruments, usually so inspiring, filled even the most courageous and experienced with dread. The Hagib Muhamad Almanzor made his prayer of the dawn; the generals took up their respective positions and assembled their banners. The Christians also put themselves in movement, their divisions coming forth in excellent order, and the earth trembling beneath their feet.

Then the *Ataquebiras** and clamours of all kinds arising from both camps, the roars of the trumpets and the thunders of the drums, with the neighings of a thousand horses, a thousand times repeated, were sent back in echoes from the neighbouring hills, until it seemed that the earth and heavens were coming together. The battle commenced with equal animosity, as with equal bravery, on both sides, and was maintained with admirable constancy by either host. The Christian cavaliers, with their horses sheathed in mail, fought like famished wolves, and their generals appeared everywhere in the hottest fury of the struggle, directing and animating their people. Muhamad Almanzor in like manner spurred his fiery charger in turn towards every part of his force; he resembled a raging panther leaping on the prey, and thirsting for blood. With his Andalusian cavalry he dashed amidst the iron-clad warriors, and plunging into the thickest of the ardent fight, enraged at

* The *Ataquebiras* are those praises to God with which the Moslemah enter the battle, crying "Allah, Hu Acbar"—God is the greatest, the most powerful.—*Condé*.

the unusual tenacity of the resistance, and the barbarous valour of those infidel hordes. His generals also performed miracles of bravery; the African cavaliers more than once broke the ranks of those serried squadrons, which the Christians, on their part, hastened to close and make good, giving them to appear the moment after that encounter as though naught had assailed them. The dust arising from that enormous extent of battle-field obscured the sun before his hour, and with its thick darkness anticipated the dusky wings of night; thus separating the contending hosts without either being able to say that the other had yielded a foot of that ensanguined space, although the earth had become hidden beneath the multitude of the corpses, and reeked with the blood of men.

That night, as Muhamad Almanzor sat waiting in his pavilion, for the accustomed assembling of his generals, and looked that they should come around him, as was their wont, he perceived that they delayed to appear; and enquiring the cause, he discovered that nearly all who had not already fallen on the field of battle were severely wounded. Then alone did he comprehend the extent of injury that his host had suffered, whereupon he gave orders that the camp should be broken up, and before the dawn Almanzor was on his way to the passage of the Douro, which he effected by the bridges of Andalusia: but his retreat was made with the diminished force arranged in order of battle, lest the Christians should follow to renew the fight.

On their part, those Infidels, remarking the movement in the Moslemah camp, and believing their enemy to be about to renew the sanguinary contest, arranged themselves also in order of battle; but becoming aware of the retirement of Almanzor, they made no effort to intercept his march, wearied as they were with the labours of the previous day, and their force as well as that of the Hagib being much weakened by the heavy losses they had sustained.

Almanzor was in the meanwhile pursuing his retreating path, but with a spirit so dejected and oppressed, that he neglected to give attention to wounds of considerable gravity which he had himself received in the battle: the agitation of mind and sadness of heart which he suffered, rendered those injuries more serious; he became unable to

retain his seat on horseback, and felt that his life was approaching its close. His people then placed him in a litter, and thus borne on the shoulders of the soldiery, he proceeded some fourteen leagues further, which brought him to Walcorari, on the frontiers of Castile and in the vicinity of Medina Zelim. Here he was met by his son Abdelmelic, who had been despatched by the king Hixem El Muyad Billah to enquire of his welfare. In this place Almanzor died, and that event occurred on Monday the twenty-fifth* of the moon Ramazan in the year of the Hegira 392,† he being at that time in the sixty-fifth year of his age.

When the rumour of his death began to be heard among the troops, there rose the voice of bitter wailing, and they said, "We have lost our leader, our defender, our father;" and they spoke the truth: long did the soldiers mourn him with a heavy sorrow. The command of the host was assumed by Abdelmelic Almudafar, son of the Hagib Muhamad; and the troops bore the body of their general to Medina Zelim, where they interred the remains in the vestments which Almanzor had worn in the battle, seeing that he died in the service of God: they covered him, moreover, with the aromatic dust collected in more than fifty victorious contests against the Infidels. His bier was accompanied by the whole army; the prayer for him being said by his son Abdelmelic. May God have mercy upon him!

Very remarkable is the sepulchre of Almanzor at Medina Zelim, and upon it are engraved the following verses:—

"He lives no more: but his high deeds have left
So proud a memory in this lower world,
That, hearing their relation, thou mayst know him
As stood he living there before thine eyes.

* Edobi, Alabar, and Hayan Homaidi, all agree in assigning the 25th of Ramazan, 392, as the date of Almanzor's death; but Abulfeda, in his Annals, affirms that 393 was the year, and the Archbishop Rodrigo gives the same date. The epitaph of the Hagib is repeated by numerous authors, and among them by Abu Zeib Ben Xarif, who cites it in his work on the metric art. The Annalist of Fez adds that he was covered with the dust of his battles before mentioned. Husein Ben Asim wrote the life of Muhamad Almanzor under the title of "Alamerian Exploits." The Spanish version of the epitaph given in the text was made by my friend Don Leandro Fernandez de Moratin. —*Condé*.

† A.D. 1002.

Such as he was we shall not see again
Through all the coming ages. Never more
Shall rise so great a leader. Ever conquering,
Of Ismail's people he increased the empire,
That well he knew to guard. Alas, our father,
Our shelter, and our shield!"

The Hagib Muhamad Ben Abdallah Ben Abi Amer, called Almanzor, ruled the state with much glory and honour during five and twenty years: he was entrusted by Sobiha, mother of King Hixem, with all negotiations, whether of peace or war, and nothing was done in the kingdom without his consent, insomuch that he wanted only the name of king: but, of a truth, to his prudence, bravery, and good fortune, the country owed great prosperity and numerous conquests. He was always the victor of its enemies, and never saw the infidel host that he did not defeat it; neither was city or fortress ever besieged by him without being compelled to surrender. The frontier of the Moslemah was extended by his prowess to the uttermost limits of Spain, and made to stretch from sea to sea. During all the time of his government the internal peace of the state never suffered interruption, because the fear in which all men stood of the Hagib prevented any from daring to raise the slightest spark of sedition, or venture a single act of disobedience: thus the insurrections by which all Spain had previously been but too often set in flames, was unknown in the time of Almanzor, wherefore the state was in his day great and flourishing: it had; indeed, attained, beneath the rule of his hand, to a degree of power and importance not hoped for in earlier times. The victorious battles which Almanzor fought against the Christians amounted to more than fifty, insomuch that their intimidated kings had more than once sent to intreat for peace, but could not obtain it at his hand.

Muhamad Almanzor was born in the year 327, which was that of the great battle of Alhandac near Zamora; and his death took place at the end of Ramazan in the year 392. The Lord selected the arm of Almanzor to avenge Islam.

When the fatal intelligence of the Hagib's death reached Cordova it caused the utmost grief, and the day was one of universal mourning not in that city only but throughout

the kingdom ; and it was long before the people could console themselves for that heavy loss.

The populace of Cordova had at this time certain verses, written by Ibrahim Ben Edris El Hasani, very frequently in their mouths. These lines prognosticated evil to the State from the predominance of Almanzor and his partizans, whom he called the Alameries; and for having written the same, that noble African poet had received sentence of banishment from Cordova some short time after the death of Alhassan Ben Kenuz. The verses are these:—

“ All Heaven and the glad Earth rejoicing lay
Bathed in your crescent Moon's refugent light,
Ye sons of great Omeya. But the Full
Hath come, and the Decresence must ensue.

Yea, much I fear me that the deep eclipse
Now paling her fair beams, shall pass no more
Till comes the utter darkness. Your clear star
Once shining high, hath sunk, and Fortune's smile
Hath left your house, ye sons of great Omeya.”

CHAP. CIII.—OF THE GOVERNMENT OF ABDELMELIC ALMUDAFAR,
SON OF THE HAGIB MUHAMAD ALMANZOR.

THE Sultana Sobiha, mother of Hixem El Muyad Billah, was removed from life about this time ; but before her departure she had counselled her son to place the government in the hands of Abdelmelic, son of Almanzor, in whom she trusted that there would be found the qualities of prudence, bravery, and virtue, which had distinguished his father. And as the Sultana-mother had advised him to do, Hixem Ben Alhakem did, all applauding that judicious decision, since it was known that Abdelmelic Almudafar had inherited the valour and prudence of Muhamad Almanzor, although he had not the same invariable good fortune. And in that respect his life contradicted the predictions of the astrologers, who had prophesied at his birth that the greatness of Spain would arrive at its highest degree of glory in his days ; yet it is true that for some time the state did enjoy considerable prosperity under his government. King Hixem

meanwhile continued in his wonted retirement, given up to the pleasures by which he was surrounded and in which he had passed his life.

In Africa, the Ameer Alman Ben Zeiri had held command since the death of his father, Zeiri Ben Atia; the Zenete Cabilas having proffered him their allegiance. Being made acquainted with the departure of Muhamad Almanzor from the life of this world, Alman Ben Zeiri wrote to Abdelmelic, requesting him to confirm his nomination as Ameer of Magreb, to which the son of Almanzor consented without delay, sending him at the same time a magnificent vestment, a sword, and a fine horse richly caparisoned. Nor did Alman Ben Zeiri fail to maintain his obedience faithfully to the Hagib Abdelmelic and to King Hixem Ben Alhakem, whom he caused to be proclaimed in all his states: wherefore, to increase his power, Abdelmelic recalled the general Wadha El Feti from his office as Wali of Fez, commanding that general to return to Cordova, and placing the government of Fez and its dependencies in the hands of Alman Ben Zeiri.

Being thus favoured, Alman offered to send a yearly present to Cordova, consisting of a certain number of horses selected from those of the most noble race, with suitable caparisons; and that proposal being accepted, with the first of those presents he dispatched his son Manser as a hostage for his loyalty and obedience. This happened in the year 393, and the young Manser soon became much beloved among the greater nobles of Cordova, where he remained until the commencement of those tribulations and civil discords which eventually ensued, and wherein the state and dignity of the Alamerics* came to an end, as we shall presently see. God alone is eternal, and His sovereignty alone endureth for ever.

Now the Hagib Abdelmelic Almudafar had proposed to himself to walk in the footsteps of his father as regarded the Infidel, making two irruptions in each year on the territories of the Christian kings; and in this year of 393 he did very happily avenge the blood of the Moslemah which had flowed on the day that beheld the Hagib Almanzor receive his death wound. In his first campaign Abdelmelic

* The partizans of the house of Muhamad Almanzor were so called.

repaired to the eastern frontier of Spain, and arrived at Lerida, where he gave battle to the Christians, and defeating them with great slaughter, drove them back to their mountains: the strife was a very obstinate one, and in the midst of it there died that Ayub Ben Amer of Saltis, who, having become an object of suspicion to the Hagib Almanzor on account of the peace made with the king of Gallicia, had been imprisoned by him in the year 385, as before related: but having been released by Abdelmelic, he had accompanied that ruler in the campaign now in question, and had died fighting with much valour. His remains were then buried in the mosque of Lerida.

The Hagib Abdelmelic Almudafar then returned to Cordova, where he was received with many demonstrations of gladness; the people having conceived much hope from the success of his first campaign as Hagib, and all promising themselves a succession of triumphs and victories over the Infidel.

Now the Cadi of Cordova, Aben Dhakuen, had recommended the Hagib Abdelmelic Almudafar to confer the charge of the Cadiate of Toledo on Chalaf Ben Meruan, El Sahari, who was much renowned for his wisdom and virtues, which Abdelmelic did accordingly; but the Sahari accepted that office with reluctance, and shortly afterwards requested his dismissal from its cares, desiring to devote himself to religious meditations, and the practices of asceticism, with undisturbed tranquillity. Chalaf Ben Meruan had studied in Cordova, and in the year 372 had repaired to the East for the further prosecution of his studies.

At this time that erudite and renowned poet of Eastern Spain, Suleiman Ben Mohran, of Saragossa, arrived in Cordova, and instantly joined the Academics, or assemblies of active spirits, who met in the house of the Vizier Abulasbag Iza Ben Said, who was a member of the Mexuar, or Council of the Hagib Abdelmelic Almudafar, where many learned men were in the habit of assembling after the death of Muhamad Almanzor. But among these there was one who would never appear in any of the meetings, or take part in the customary competitions, after that ruler had departed from life. This was Said Ben El Hassan, El Rebai, called Abu-

lola, who, though constantly urged to join them by the Sons of the Hagib, could never be prevailed on to do so.

"A friend of mine," saith Abu Meruan Ben Hayan, "did nevertheless hear this Abulola reciting certain verses which he had made to the praise of Abdelmelic Almudafar, son of Muhamad Almanzor, in the year 396; but a short time after that the poet determined to leave Spain, and passed over into Sicily, where he spent the remainder of his life, and eventually died, departing to the mercy of Allah in the year 417."

Towards the close of the year 393, Chalaf Ben Mesaud El Jurawi of Melila, called El Malki, and known as Aben Amina, came to Cordova for the purpose of continuing his studies in that city, where his erudition and other excellent qualities caused him to be much esteemed by the Hagib Abdelmelic Almudafar, as well as by the Cadi, Abu Dhak-nên. In that year there died at Seville the most accomplished scholar of Spain: this was Abu Omar Ahmed Ben Abdallah, known as El Begi, whose acquirements in the different branches of art and science surpassed those of every other man in that country. There was no man of reputation for learning whom the father of Abu Omar had not sought and appropriated to the benefit of his son: the young man studied with all the most learned doctors, whether of the East or West, travelling for that purpose in Africa, Egypt, Syria, and Khorassan; insomuch that at the age of eighteen the extent of his knowledge was a marvel. He lived the greater part of his days in Seville, where he was born; and even in his earliest youth the Cadi of that city, Aben Faweris, very frequently consulted him in affairs of the highest importance.

At Cordova, in the same year, there died the celebrated general Jali Ben Ahmed Ben Jali, one of the most able leaders of the Alameries. In the last hours of his life he expressed deep regret for the sickness, which, reducing him to the necessity of dying in his bed, had not permitted him to depart from life on the field of battle, as becomes a good cavalier.

In the year 394, the Hagib Abdelmelic Almudafar assembled a large force of cavalry, with equal strength of foot-soldiers, and marched towards the frontiers of Galicia, which

he crossed, carrying into that country the devastation of the tempest. He met the Christian host in a pitched battle near Leon, and having defeated his enemies he took possession of the city. After this the Hagib continued his incursions on the Comarcas with tolerable success, and having constantly retained a certain amount of advantage over the Infidels, he returned to Cordova with much spoil and many captives. During four consecutive years did the Hagib Abdelmelic Almudafar thus march on the territories of the Christians, bearing ruin and devastation along the whole line of the frontier, east and west, nor did he once fail to destroy in the summer whatever those Infidels had been able to make good during the winter. In this year of 394 there appeared in the heavens a comet, or blazing star, of great magnitude and astonishing splendour.

In the year 396 there was witnessed a second phenomenon of similar kind; a bright star, namely, which was seen in the heavens, and was one of those which are accompanied by great thunders while they run their course: this being one of the twelve notable ones mentioned by the most ancient observers. The learned watched the course of that star with much attention, and many were of opinion that none of this species ever appears unless when God the Highest, in His special providence, hath determined to bring about great changes in the world.

In this same year the ships of the Moslemah sailed to the coasts of Italy, and making a descent upon Salerno they put that city to contribution. But while the invaders were carelessly awaiting the treasure thus exacted, the inhabitants made a sudden onslaught, whereby their assailants were thrown into great confusion; and although they did ultimately succeed in regaining their ships, that was not done before they had suffered an irreparable loss, the bravest of their number having perished in the conflict.

The Hagib Abdelmelic Almudafar, repairing to the city of Toledo in the year 397, there visited the Xequé Muhamad Ben Ibrahim El Coxeri, of Cordova, a man of great wisdom, and extensively known for his prudence in council, the austerity of his life, and his contempt for all the vanities of the world. It chanced that Abdelmelic one day proceeding to visit this sage on a certain Juma after the hour of

public prayer, found the doctor surrounded by his disciples, to whom he was expounding a question of science. Having requested permission to enter, Abdelmelic received the Xequé's reply desiring him to do so; but although Muhamad Ibrahim perceived that it was the Hagib who approached, he bade his disciples not rise to receive him, but keep their places, which they all did as commanded. Abdelmelic entered the apartment, where he was received by the Xequé with much courtesy, which he returned by doing great honour to the school of the sage. After remaining a certain time, the son of Almanzor took his leave, entreating that Muhamad Ben Ibrahim would recommend him to God in his Adoas, or supplications: whereupon the Xequé instantly made his prayer and said, "Allahoma!* O Lord Allah! In the hearts of the subjects of this thy servant do thou place the perfection of obedience, and in his heart let there be love and good will for them all." With that blessing the Hagib Abdelmelic Almudafar departed.

Having remained at Toledo for some time awaiting the assembling of the banners of that province, Abdelmelic then pursued his march, and falling on the territories of the Christians he inflicted great damage on those unbelievers.

At that time there came to Cordova not a few of the most important men among the Christians, who had left their home in consequence of certain disquietudes there prevailing, and these persons now requested permission from the Hagib Abdelmelic Almudafar to establish their abode in the capital, or within a short distance of its gates. Abdelmelic then made known that request to King Hixem, who rejoiced much in their demand, and accorded them permission to dwell within the city itself, causing them to be given houses in gardens, wherein they might dwell with security and much convenience.

The kings of the Christians now begged peace from the Moslemah, but Almudafar made reply to the effect that he could not live at peace with them, and would not consent to more than a truce of two years. The conditions for this truce were then made by the intervention of Abdallah Ben Ab-

* "Allahoma is an invocation of the Creator, which expresses the utmost warmth of love, trust, and reverence: it has all the force and energy of the interjection, without its form.—*Condé*.

delaziz, Wali of Toledo, who was one of the family of the Meruans, was a kinsman of the king, and had been a great friend of the Hagib Muhamad Almanzor, whom he had accompanied in many of his campaigns, but more especially in the incursions made by Almanzor against the people of Gallicia.

This Abdallah had also contracted a close friendship with the king of the Christians, who frequently sent him magnificent presents in vases of gold and silver. And the commencement of that amicable intercourse was on this wise: among the captives taken in one of his irruptions, Abdallah Ben Abdelaziz had found a very beautiful damsel, whose graces of demeanor, with her gentle sweetness and high cultivation of mind, had subdued the heart of Abdallah, by whom she was beloved without measure; but having been informed that the damsel was the daughter of the Christian king, the general sent her back with all her attendants to her father's court, nor would he accept any ransom for one of the number.

The years of peace accorded by that truce having elapsed, Almudafar then prepared once more to make incursions on the Comarcas of the Christians. He destroyed the fortresses which they had constructed, cut up the tilled ground, and took much spoil, with many captives. The walls of Avila were demolished by his order; and, proceeding to Salamanca, he thence pushed forward into the interior of Gallicia and Portugal. In his backward march, the Hagib took his way by the shores of the Douro, destroying the fortresses of Gormaz and Uxada as he proceeded. These things done, Abdelmelic returned conqueror to Cordova, where he arrived with a large force of cavalry. This took place in the year 898, and in the same year he marched again upon Gallicia, taking in his company the young Manser, son of Almaan Ben Zeiri, the Wali of Fez.

On this expedition, the Hagib Abdelmelic Almudafar rode at the head of four thousand cavaliers, all clothed in cuirasses and coats of mail glittering like the stars, their horses also being furnished with caparisons of silk having a doubled lining. That body was followed by the cavalry of Andalusia and Africa—soldiers well inured to war, and most of

whom had distinguished themselves in many a perilous encounter. These troops were led by the Wali of Toledo, the Governor of Badalyos, and the young Manser Ben Almaan, who was mounted on a fiery war-horse, furious as a lion of the desert, and partaking of all that animosity to the foe which was felt by his valiant rider.

The Christians came forth to meet the Moslemah host with infinite bravery ; but, although they were the heroes of their time, men who had acquired their experience in many battles, and were familiar with all the terrors and cruelties of the hottest fight, yet they were thrown into confusion, defeated, and put to flight, the forces of the Hagib falling upon them like dragons, and at length forcing them from a field which they would yet not abandon until it had been died a deep red with their blood.

The pursuit was taken up by Abdelmelic Almudafar himself, who followed the Infidels with his cavalry ; but they, having obtained a partial refuge among the asperities of a somewhat difficult pass, recovered from their dismay. They then renewed the sanguinary combat, and fought like raging tigers, insomuch that the Moslemah there suffered great loss. The night coming on, put an end to the struggle, and under favour of the obscurity the Christians retired to their savage mountains ; then the Moslemah, seeing the notable losses they had sustained, recrossed the frontier, and thence proceeding to Medina Toledo, they finally returned to Cordova.

No long time after the close of the campaign here in question, the Hagib Abdelmelic Almudafar fell sick, and that heavy malady increasing unto death, he departed in the moon of Safar in the year 399, not without grave suspicions that he had been poisoned. His death was deeply regretted by all good men ; and his bier was accompanied to the burial-place by all the nobles of the city. Abdelmelic, the son of Almanzor, governed the state with much prudence and prosperity during a period of six years and four months.

In this year there also died the preceptor of the Hagib Abdelmelic Almudafar, Ahmed Ben Abdelaziz Ben Ferazi Ben Abi Hubab of Cordova, a wise and excellent man.

He had lived ninety years, and was buried in the Macbora or cemetery of the Rusafa. The prayer was made for him by the Cadi Ahmed Ben Dhecuen.

CHAP. CIV.—OF THE GOVERNMENT OF ABDERAHMAN, SON OF
ALMANZOR, AND OF HIS DEATH.

THE King Hixem El Muyad Billah, who had no will but that of his servants, received from them the proposal to appoint Abderahman, brother of Abdelmelic Almudafar, his Hagib, and he did so accordingly. In this Abderahman, who was a captain of his guard, the king hoped to find the high qualities and good fortune which had distinguished and accompanied his father and brother; but it is a common thing for man to be mistaken in his judgments and disappointed in his hopes: God alone is omniscient.

When Amaan* Ben Zeiri was made acquainted with the choice of the new Hagib, he sent rich presents, which were offered to Abderahman Ben Muhamad Almanzor by the hands of the young Manser, son of Amaan Ben Zeiri, who was then residing in Cordova as a hostage for his father's fidelity. Among the gifts thus presented were one hundred and fifty horses of the most generous race: and the Hagib Abderahman, well content with the courtesy of Amaan, did great honour to the envoys of that Ameer, giving them rich vestments and precious jewels, with other marks of favour: he also sent the young Manser back to his father. More than ever bound to the Hagib by that obligation, Amaan Ben Zeiri collected the best horses that could be found in Barbary, and these he despatched into Andalusia to the number of one thousand, than which a more costly and valuable gift was never sent from Almagreb to Spain.

Now the Hagib Abderahman Ben Muhamad was a young man much devoted to his pleasures; he spent the day in

* Or Alman, as elsewhere written. Our author, following his Arabic authorities with scrupulous fidelity, and seeking his materials in the pages of many writers, adopts the orthography now of one and now of another, a practice of which we here have an instance.—Tz.

the elegant occupations of chivalry, and the night in festive entertainments, never having been accustomed to the severity of manners, the grave application to the business of government, and the toils of war, in which the days and nights of his father and brother had been employed ; he was altogether occupied by the pleasures and pastimes of the court. Yet Abderahman was of his nature a frank and cordial youth, nor by any means the worthless and indolent person whom he is by some writers declared to have been. Those who describe him as a man without self-respect, and the disgrace of his lineage, and who affirm that he merited nothing better than deposition from his office, are mere detractors.

Possessing great riches, Abderahman was so generous in giving, as to border on prodigality : in his person and the height of his stature he resembled his father Almanzor, and even for that circumstance was greatly beloved by the people, who applauded all his levities, and found something to admire in his most extravagant tastes. He lived in the closest intimacy with the King Hixem El Muyad Billah : but the familiarity of princes is often fatal to him who enjoyeth the same—rarely doth it endure—very rarely hath it found a happy termination,—whether because the man so privileged having nothing more to wish, is apt to become negligent of his service and exacting in his expectations, or whether, losing his judgment in the giddiness of his height, he gives occasion to the unquiet spirit of ambition, which is ever mining the edifices of vanity, to work his downfall, is not here to be discussed,—it shall suffice us to know, that the instability of his condition who lives on the breath of princes is a truth universally acknowledged.

Now the King Hixem El Muyad Billah had no son to succeed him in the empire, and although his age was not such as to make his having one improbable, yet the young Hagib Abderahman, consulting only his inconsiderate vanity, had the boldness to propose that his sovereign should declare him the future successor to the throne. But in this he did not consider the kinsmen of the king, of whose opinions on the subject he made no account whatever. Confiding in the unstable inclinations of the people, who loved and blessed him, with a blind devotion on the part of some, and

on that of others with a better founded affection, resulting from their respect to the memory of his father, he continued to press the matter, until he had persuaded King Hixem to accede to his wishes; the public declaration of the king's purpose to be suspended only until after Abderahman Ben Almanzor should return from his first expedition against the Christians, in which he hoped to obtain a brilliant success.

These things were as yet discussed in secret only, and within the halls of the Alcazar; yet suspicions of what was intended did not fail to be aroused by those slight circumstances which ever betray what the parties concerned believe they are ably concealing, and the hatred and indignation of all connected with the house of Meruan was at once awakened thereby. These feelings were more especially manifested by a cousin of the king, a young man called Muhamad Ben Hixem Ben Abdelgiabar Ben Abderahman Anasir, a young man of much bravery, who was the presumed successor to the throne, in the event of there being no son born to King Hixem. This Muhamad not being able to endure any longer the pretensions of the Hagib Abderahman, whom the people called Anasir, departed for Cordova, and repaired to the frontiers of Castile, in which country he assembled numerous forces. Many Alcaldes holding rule in that district then joined the party of Muhamad Ben Hixem, and having called their banners together, they entered Andalusia, making the vain hopes and unreasonable aspirations of the Hagib Abderahman a subject of consideration and disapproval in all the towns through which they passed. These partizans of Muhamad declared that the Hagib had compelled King Hixem's assent to his desire for being declared successor to the throne, and had acted without any regard to the respect due from his family to the royal house of Meruan. It was not difficult to persuade the nobles to oppose themselves to that design, and the rather as many of them were already sufficiently envious of the power monopolized by the Alabarics, as the family and partizans of the Hagib Muhamad Ben Abdallah Ben Abi Amer, El Moaferi, named Almanzor, had long been called.

When Abderahman Ben Muhamad received intelligence

of what had been done, and saw the tempest approaching, he took arms with infinite diligence, and sallied forth from Cordova with the African cavalry and guard of the king, hoping to defeat and disembarass himself of his enemies before they could have time to increase and concentrate their power. But scarcely had the Hagib left the city, before Muhamad Ben Hixem was informed of his departure by the Vizier Iza Ben Said and others attached to his party, who furthermore took care to let him know that the garrison of Cordova was not a strong one. Acting on that intelligence, Muhamad divided his forces into two bands, and marching by remote ways, he hastened with the utmost celerity to the capital, which he entered with the flower of his cavalry. At once possessing himself of the Alcazar, Muhamad likewise seized the person of King Hixem; and that done, he published an edict deposing the Hagib Abderahman Ben Almanzor from his office.

Thus, then, did malicious fortune begin suddenly to perturb and disarrange the previously prosperous affairs of Spain.

But now the Hagib Abderahman, receiving notice in his turn of what had taken place, was filled with a violent anger, and, in opposition to the advice of his counsellors, returned immediately to Cordova, confiding more implicitly than he should have done in that unstable thing the inclination of the people, and supposing that he should be borne forward to empire by the popular breath. He entered the city with his cavalry, meeting no resistance; but when he had reached the palace of the Alcazar, he found that position occupied by a large force, consisting of all the principal men of Cordova, with a great mass of the common people, now become the partizans of Muhamad Ben Hixem.

A sanguinary combat then ensued, the cavalry of Abderahman breaking and dispersing that multitude at the first onset; but the deposed Hagib soon found to his astonishment that the assembled populace did not respond to his appeal as he had so confidently anticipated: many paid no regard to his voice, once so potent among them, but cried "Death to him! death to him!" It is true that the cavaliers by whom Abderahman was attended cut down all before them; but the numbers of their opponents perpetually

increasing, he was at length compelled to order a retreat, and endeavour to force his way out of the city. This could be effected only by making a cruel carnage among the people; but Abderahman, fighting like a lion, succeeded in defending himself and covering his retiring friends, until a great number of his people had died around him. Still he made good his retreat like the valiant man that he was, until, attacked from behind and on each side, as well as in front, his horse falling dead beneath him, after a fearful struggle, he lay at the mercy of his enemies, pierced with the thrusts of many a lance. Thus badly wounded, he was dragged to the presence of Muhamad Ben Hixem, who instantly commanded his people to crucify the conquered Ilagib; an atrocity which was committed without the loss of a moment. Thus died Abderahman, son of the great Almanzor, and brother to the illustrious Abdelmelic Almudafar. Yet there are still men to be found who can venture to confide their fate to the changeful and ungrateful people. The death of Abderahman Ben Muhamad took place on an unhappy Tuesday, the 18th of the moon Giumada,* in the year 399.† He had held the government four months.

And now the name of him who but a few days before was the object of the popular admiration, was heard only to be vituperated and made an object of calumny by those who had scarcely ceased from blessing him for the benefits received at his hands. The wealth of Abderahman was confiscated to the use of the state, and he was never mentioned but in terms of obloquy and contempt,—the vulgar crowd called him “Sanchuelo,” and his friends dared not defend his memory,—nay, they could not venture to appear in public without subjecting themselves to the insolent aggressions of the base multitude.

Muhamad Abdelgiabar was meanwhile proceeding on the path of his ambition, disregarding the Alamerics, who were

* Homaidi affirms that the unfortunate Abderahman Ben Almanzor was crucified in the moon of Regeb; but the dates of subsequent events confirm that given above, which is the period assigned by writers of the highest authority.—*Condé*.

† A.D. 1008.

nevertheless neither few in number nor insignificant in power: he availed himself of the popular favour which he momentarily enjoyed, and caused those of his party to present a supplication to King Hixem, entreating the monarch to appoint Muhamad his Hagib. Succeeding in this first attempt, he next,—knowing that the Africans of the guard, who were for the most part of the Zenete Cabilas, had incurred the detestation of the multitude,—commanded that body to depart from the palace, and even from the capital; an order by which he secured to himself the abhorrence of those troops, as well as of their generals and other superior officers, who belonged to the noblest families of Africa.

The new Hagib next appointed Chalaf Ben Meruan Ben Omeya Ben Haywat, known as El Sahari, to be President to the Council of State; therein according him the preference over the Cadi of the Aljama of Cordova, Aben Dhaknen. Chalaf Ben Meruan was called El Sahari, from Sahara Kaywat, a town in the Spanish Algarve, which had belonged to his great-grandfather. Before becoming president of the council he had been Cadi of Toledo, an office to which he was appointed by the Hagib Abderahman Almudafar on his return from his travels in the East, but which he had resigned on the death of that ruler and of the Wali of the city, Abdallah Ben Abdelaziz.

The Hagib Muhamad Ben Hixem furthermore selected the Cadi Ahmed Ben Abderahman Ben Said, El Huzami, a man greatly esteemed for his learning and other merits, to be Walilcoda or Chief Justice of the Algarbia of Cordova. To his own son Obeidala he gave the government of Toledo, sending with him as his vizier the renowned poet, Suleiman Ben Muhamad Ben Batal, called Abu Ayoub of Badalyos, a man of singular genius, who was the especial favourite of the Hagib Muhamad Ben Hixem.

Among the first cares of Muhamad was that of removing from the person of the king all the old and trusted servants to whose ministrations he had become accustomed, but who were now replaced by others belonging to the party of the new Hagib. A few days after having effected this change, desiring to set himself above the reach of fortune's caprices, and further to try how far his destiny would bear him,

Muhamad sent about a report to the effect that the king was attacked by a dangerous malady. Then, seeing that the people took but little interest in the condition of their sovereign, while the Walies, Viziers, and Alchatibes already regarded himself as the future successor to the throne, he resolved to assassinate the unfortunate Hixem; but the Alameri Wadha, who was chamberlain to King Hixem, and much attached to his person, succeeded in dissuading Muhamad from that purpose: acting with equal boldness and prudence, he found means to convince the Hagib that he might very well succeed in his designs without taking the life of the poor king, who, living retired as he did, and being besides well guarded, would present no obstacle to the views entertained by his Hagib. He added, that Muhamad Ben Hixem might take all the precautions needful for his security, and even suggested himself such as he thought most efficacious.

Persuaded by all the reasons urged by Wadha El Alameri, Muhamad agreed with the chamberlain that King Hixem should be shut up in great secrecy, the guardianship of his person being confided to one in whom the Hagib felt much confidence.

Many authors tell us that the conspirators placed their sovereign in the house of the Vizier Husein Ben Hay, and that having sought out a man who closely resembled King Hixem in age, height, and features, they carried off that person in the night-time, strangled, or, as others say, drowned him, and having laid his remains in the bed of the sovereign, then spread about the report of Hixem's malady, which has been mentioned above; and, as if by his order, performed the solemnity of declaring the Hagib Muhamad to be his successor. The Walies and Viziers having assembled, they published that declaration, and a few hours afterwards the intelligence of Hixem's death was also made public. This done, they placed the supposed king on the bier, and buried him with great pomp, his sepulchre being erected in the first court of the Alcazar; all which took place on the 25th day of the moon Giumada Postrera, in the year 399.

CHAP. CV.—OF THE REIGN OF MUHAMAD EL MOHDI BILLAH.

ON the day when this pretended burial of the king was effected, Muhamad Ben Hixem Ben Abdelgiabar Ben Abderahman Anasir was proclaimed King of Spain in Cordova. He called himself El Mohdi* Billah; and the prayer was made for him in all the Alminbares of the kingdom. The coins were likewise immediately struck in his name. Enthroned by these means, one of the earliest acts of the new king's reign was to repeat and confirm the order previously given for the expulsion of the African guard, and which he now caused to be executed with the utmost rigour. Offended by this decision, the officers assembled, and, taking counsel together, they resolved to resist the order: they prepared to use their arms for that purpose accordingly, being animated in their determination by the captain of the guard, Hixem Raxid Ben Suleiman Ben Abderahman Anasir, who declared the new king a traitorous assassin of his sovereign, and encouraged the Zenetes, with the men of Barbary, to resist his commands to the death.

The conspirators then proceeded to surround the Alcazar, demanding the head of him whom they called the unjust usurper of the throne: but Muhamad sallied forth against them at the head of the Andalusian guard, when a sanguinary combat ensued. The inhabitants of Cordova quickly assembled in vast numbers, and, taking part with the Andalusians against the Africans, compelled the latter to retire; but they made a fearful carnage among the citizens, who had offered themselves with more boldness than prudence to that unequal struggle, which lasted all that evening and through a great part of the night; nay, the conflict was recommenced with the first approach of the dawn.

The Africans were nevertheless finally compelled to abandon their quarters and make their way from the city as they best could, having to contest every step with the countless multitude, whose wish it was to see them utterly

* This appellation implies Tranquillizer or Conciliator; yet the subsequent events did but ill accord with the hopes held out by the title thus chosen.—*Condé*.

exterminated, but whom they repelled with extraordinary valour. In that perilous retreat, the brave general of the Africans, Hixem Ben Suleiman, fell wounded with his falling horse in the midst of a troop of Andalusians, who bore him to the presence of Muhamad; the latter immediately commanding that his head should be struck off and thrown over the city wall in the face of the African troops, who had succeeded in forcing their way from the capital.

When they were thus made acquainted with the death of their general, the infuriated Africans hurled loud cries of vengeance against their enemies, and thirsting for blood that should worthily avenge that of their leader, they chose as his successor one in whom they hoped to find a terrible denunciator of woe to the destroyers. This was a cousin of the unhappy general whose head lay before them, even Suleiman Ben Alhakem Ben Anasir, a man of much prudence, as well as of indomitable valour.

This leader, considering that the forces he commanded did not suffice to maintain the siege of the city and resist the power of Muhamad, then struck his camp,—and some say that this was done at once, being Thursday, the 5th day of the moon Xawal, in that same year of 399;—but we are assured by Homaidi that Suleiman Ben Alhakem made another attempt to force the Alcazar, and obtain possession of Muhamad's person, when, being once more compelled to retreat and leave the city, he departed to the frontiers of Gallicia, where he sought aid from the King of the Christians, Count Sancho. Homaidi adds that the latter assured him of his friendship, entrusted him with several fortresses on that line of frontier, which he permitted him to occupy with his troops, and received in return certain promises from Suleiman Ben Alhakem, who agreed to procure for the Christian King the concession of many strong places which he required for the defence of his frontier, and which he was to receive, on condition of his then assisting the Africans in their attack on Muhamad Ben Hixem, calling himself King of Spain.

This agreement having been made, Suleiman Ben Alhakem Ben Anasir marched against Cordova with an auxiliary force of Christian cavaliers—brave and select troops. These assailants were met by Muhamad Ben Hixem, who sallied

forth on receiving intelligence of their approach, with a very powerful host. It was about the middle of the moon of *Rebie Primera*, in the year 400, that the two armies encountered each other, which they did at *Gebal Quintos*, when a fearful contest ensued. The battle was commenced by the Andalusian cavalry, and after a sanguinary combat of several hours, more than twenty thousand of the Cordovan troops lay dead or wounded on the field.

*Abu Meruan Ben Hayan** tells us that in this battle *Abu Othman Ben Algezar*, of Cordova, must have lost his life, since it was known that he had been seen fighting in the *mêlée*, but he was never beheld from that moment, either living or dead; and a similar fate befel that illustrious poet the *Vizier Aly Ben Fath* of Cordova, who never appeared again, either in life or death, after having entered into the horrors of that exterminating conflict, which took place on a Saturday in the middle of the moon of *Rebie Primera*, as we have said.

Muhamad Ben Hixem ultimately fled with the shattered remnant of his host: he crossed the mountains, and passing the plains of *Calatrava*, arrived at *Toledo*, where his son *Obeidala* held the appointment of *Wali*. By the intervention of *Obeidala*, *Muhamad* also endeavoured to obtain the assistance of the Christians, and it was agreed that for a sum of money *Count Bermond* and *Count Armengudi* should supply the Moslemah with auxiliaries, whereupon those brave generals of *Afranc†* marched to his aid with a powerful body of their troops. By these negotiations, *Muhamad Ben Hixem* was detained at *Toledo* for the space of something more than six months.

CHAP. CVI.—OF SULEIMAN ALMOSTAIN BILLAH.

AFTER his victory of *Gebal Quintos*, *Suleiman Ben Alhakem Ben Suleiman Ben Anasir* pressed forward with

* A writer of the period, and an eye-witness of some of the scenes which he describes.—Tr.

† Franco.

his conquering host to Cordova, where the people of the city were desirous of opposing his entrance; but, in pursuance of advice given by the Alameri Wadha, they ultimately opened their gates to the victor. Then Suleiman, distrusting, and not without good cause, the inhabitants of Cordova, not only because of their ancient enmity to his Africans, but on account of the hatred which must have been awakened in their hearts by the recent slaughter of the citizens at Gebal Quintos, and still more because of his Christian auxiliaries,—Suleiman, I say, declined to enter the city at that moment: he concerted measures for maintaining the tranquillity of the capital with the Sclavonian Wadha El Alameri, declaring that he did not desire to oppress the inhabitants by the presence of guests so little likely to be welcome as those he had in his company; with other pretexts of much apparent courtesy. Thus encamping with his army in the surrounding Comarcas, he remained inactive until the 15th day of Rebio Postrera, in the year 400, at which period he made his entrance into the capital with his African cavalry, and was there proclaimed king, receiving the appellation of Almostain Billah.

At this same time, as we are told by Abu Meruan Ben Hayan, the people had risen against the Africans in many parts of Andalusia, and at Malaga, as that author relates, the populace tore in pieces the Havawi, Chalaf Ben Mossaudi, better known as Aben Omaina. Chalaf had entreated permission to make his prayer with two prostrations, as the sole favour that he desired at the hands of his murderers, and they had assented to grant that request, but before he had completed his supplications, they crushed his head to atoms with an enormous stone which they cast upon him for that purpose: they then tore his still quivering body limb from limb.

Suleiman Ben Albakem passed the greater part of his time at Medina Alzahra, and there he kept his auxiliaries. He changed the Alcaldes of some among the fortresses in Andalusia, placing others, who enjoyed his confidence, in their office: he visited numerous cities, and caused justice to be extended to all men wherever he appeared; but he was in perpetual movement, and his life was one of continual march and disquietude, because of the distrust he felt

of the people of Cordova. All the towns on the frontier were of his party, from Tortosa in the east of Spain to Alisbona in the west; and in many of the cities Suleiman Ben Alhakem Ben Anasir took care to place generals as governors whom he knew to be devoted to his interests.

Among the cavaliers of his African guard were two brothers of the royal family of the Beni Edris. These illustrious generals, both very young, were called Aly Ben Hamud and Alcasim Ben Hamud Ben Meruan. The elder of the two, Suleiman Ben Alhakem now placed in the government of Cepta and Tangiers in Africa; while he appointed the younger to that of Algezira Alhadra on the Spanish coast.

Now there were certain of the Cordovans who, to sow discord among the Africans, incited Meruan, the cousin of Suleiman, to rise up in revolt against the latter, promising to aid him with all their power, and declaring that the whole country would be glad to see him in the seat of his cousin, Suleiman Ben Alhakem; the latter being, as they assured Meruan, abhorred by every man. But these machinations were made known to him against whom the conspirators were contriving their mischief; and having instituted so minute an enquiry as to render himself sure of the facts, he caused fifty of the principal conspirators to have their heads taken off; his cousin Meruan he shut up in a tower of the city wall.

With the Slavonians also did Suleiman Ben Alhakem fall into discord, and the cause of that misunderstanding was as follows: they had maliciously advised him to assassinate his Christian auxiliaries, remarking that, after all, those Infidels were his natural enemies, and that the putting them to death would conciliate the affection of the Andalusians. But Suleiman rejected these counsels with bitter reproofs, declaring that he neither could nor would fail in his word to any man, nor think of recalling the promises of security once given, least of all towards those from whom he had received such effectual aid as that lent him by the Christian troops. But Suleiman was not without suspicion that the murderous treachery proposed to him might be committed even against his will, and strongly as his determination had been expressed: he therefore dismissed the Christian

auxiliaries with many gifts, and with promises in still greater abundance.

In like manner did Suleiman oppose resistance to the eager representations and repeated prayers of Wadha El Alameri, who had discovered to him the secret of King Hixem's existence, and entreated him to make known that fact to the people, replacing the imprisoned monarch on his throne; a step by which El Alameri assured him he would gain the hearts of every good Mosleman. But Suleiman is said to have replied, "I wish it earnestly, Wadha; yet I see that this is not the time to entrust ourselves to hands so weak as those of Hixem: let this matter rest, then, for the present, but be sure that his hour will come." The only alteration made in the position of the King, therefore, was, that his gaoler and the place of his abode were changed; the guardianship of his person being confided to those in whom Suleiman hoped he might place it with security.

At this time there came intelligence to Cordova, informing Suleiman Ben Alhakem that Muhamad was approaching with a carefully selected body of men, from the Comarcas of Toledo, Valencia, and Murcia, his army being furthermore reinforced by the Christians of eastern Spain, already alluded to. The host of Muhamad counted thirty thousand Moslemah, and nine thousand Christians. But, although that was double the number of the troops that were at Suleiman's command, the latter did not hesitate to go forth, and meeting the enemy at a place called Acbat Albacar, situate about ten miles from Cordova, he attacked the united force of Moslemah and Christians with his usual intrepidity.

His African cavalry, with the people of Algarve and Merida, fought all the day with unflinching bravery; but at the setting of the sun they found themselves compelled to retreat before the more numerous troops of Muhamad Ben Hixem,—wherefore, favoured by the arrival of night, Suleiman determined to leave his camp, and marched with his army to Azahra, not daring to enter Cordova.

It now became evident that the Africans could remain no longer in Andalusia; and Suleiman, gathering such treasures as he had there, prepared to depart; but, to his great

regret, the troops could not be restrained from plundering the Alcazar; they even stripped the principal mosque of its lamps of gold and silver, its chains and precious crowns; nay, they took the costly jewels, rich hangings, and other valuables, from many of the more magnificent dwellings. What they could not carry off from these latter abodes was pillaged by the troops of Muhamad and by the Cordovans themselves, who entered those palaces after Suleiman and his Africans had left them. The latter were meanwhile proceeding by forced marches towards Algezira Alhadra, with intention to pass over into Africa.

Among those who died fighting in the obstinately contested battle of Aebat Albacar, was the noble and virtuous cavalier Aboala Ben Ahmed Ben Kindi of Cordova, known as El Taital, who fell by the side of Sulciman Ben Alhakem, as did also the Mocri or reader of the Aljama of Cordova, Suleiman Ben Hixem Ben Walid Ben Colaib, and Ahmed Ben Beril, with his master, the Mocri or reader Aben El Camer.

On the side of Muhamad Ben Hixem there fell the Cadi of Elvira, Abdallah Ben Abdelaziz, who was also a native of Cordova, with the ingenious poet Muhamad Ben Mesoadi El Bacheni, a man highly favoured by the kings of his time, and whose graceful verses were the delight of Andalusia. This battle of Aebat Albacar was fought in the year 400, and received the name of the Day of the Franks, because of the people of the Frankish countries who made part of the host.

CHAP. CVII. - OF THE BATTLE OF GUADIARO, AND THE DEATH OF MUHAMAD BEN HIXEM.

AFTER his victory at Aebat Albacar, Muhamad Ben Hixem made his entry into Cordova in triumph, amidst the acclamations of the people, who called him their avenger and deliverer. One of his earliest acts was to appoint the Sclavonian Wadha El Alameri to be the Hagib of his house, an office which he bestowed on him as a mark of confidence, certainly not unmerited by the Alameri. This done, he

remained but a few days in the capital, departing thence with all the force he could muster, and with the firm resolve to pursue the Africans and complete their downfall.

But inflated by his hardly-won victory, Muhamad Ben Hixem rashly ventured to attack the enemy before his troops had recovered from the fatigues of a forced march, and Suleiman, perceiving his advantage, did not fail to make the most of it. Exhorting his Africans to their duty, he concluded his short harrangue by these words: "This day must we contend till we conquer or remain on the field: there is no hope for us save in the might of our swords; wherefore let no man bend his neck to the scimitar of his enemy; but if we may not be victors, let us at least die avenged."

That said, the General of the Africans made ready for battle, and commenced the struggle with a desperate valour. The troops of Muhamad also fought with great steadiness and bravery; but they could not resist the impetuous onset of the African guard, who were fresher and less fatigued than themselves. Thus it came to pass that Suleiman soon broke and put to flight the wearied host of Muhamad Ben Hixem, who, turning bridle, fled precipitately, and paused not till he found himself in Cordova, to the near vicinity of which place Suleiman followed with his people in pursuit of their foes.

The vanquished Muhamad entered the city with but a few soldiers of his guard, but was followed after a time by the scattered and discomfited portions of his army, as well as by the remnant of the Christian auxiliaries, which had fled by different routes. He then set himself to strengthen the fortifications of the capital, restoring the towers, repairing whatever part had become dilapidated, and causing a deep fosse to be dug around the walls; all the citizens working at these fortifications both day and night.

Meanwhile, the best hopes of Muhamad Ben Hixem reposed in his Hagib, the Slavonian Wadha El Alameri, who possessed all his confidence, and commanded with absolute power in every department of the state. The principal employments were all conferred by the Hagib Wadha on his Alamerian followers; but Muhamad did not dare to refuse his assent, although the more prudent of his counsellors and prin-

cial nobles were much displeased with that preponderance of the Slavonian. The people, too, oppressed and fatigued by the continual labours imposed on them, as well as by the insolence of such as thought they had fortune in their favour, began to abandon the party of Muhamad Ben Hixem, whose star was commencing its decline. The Slavonians completed these evils by the dangerous counsels which they gave their falling chief, whom they prevailed on to banish some of the most influential Xeques and Viziers from the city, under various pretexts: of some it was averred that they had held seditious discourse among themselves; others were accused of pretended conspiracies; and others, again, of being disaffected to the interests of Muhamad Ben Hixem; all which concurred to produce a degree of hatred to the latter which was perpetually exasperated by the oppressive insolence of his imprudent partizans.

In the moon of Dyleada of this year 400, there died at Cordova that holy person, Suleiman Ben Abdelgafir Bengmêl El Omayya, called El Firexi, a man of most austere life: he had been a brave border chief in his youth, but was now very old, and had become blind, not from his years only, but from much weeping because of the fear of God. He was born in the year 301, and when he died had attained the age of ninety-eight years. The interment of Suleiman Ben Abdelgafir Bengmêl was accompanied by a large concourse of the people; and among the poor his death was much lamented. Abu Meruan Ben Hayan tells us that he died on a Sunday, and that his burial took place on the Monday following: he was interred in the Macbora or cemetery of the suburb, immediately after the Alasar or afternoon prayer. From the same author we learn that Muhamad Ben Hixem El Mohdi himself accompanied the bier, and made the Azala or prayer for the departed, being attended by all the principal persons of the city. He affirms that so large a company was never before seen at any funeral in Cordova, and adds the following words,—“Muhamad Ben Hixem made the Azala for Suleiman El Firexi, and nineteen days only had elapsed thereafter when he was assassinated himself. May God grant him pardon!”

Now the general of the Christian auxiliaries, even the Frankish Count Armengudi, was at this time secretly informed that Muhamad Ben Hixem had resolved to betray him, and was about to depart from the promise of security and safe conduct assured to him and his people, preparing the pretext of a revolt among the populace for the purpose of disarming his troops and subsequently depriving them of life. The Christian, therefore, not disregarding the secret intelligence thus received, took care to hasten his departure under the colour of excuses which he knew how to make, and, in despite of all Muhamad's protestations, the Count drew his troops from the capital; but, on taking leave of Muhamad, he consented to be the bearer of letters exhorting the Wali of Toledo, Obeidala, to assemble whatever force he could command, and hasten to the assistance of his father, who was shut up in Cordova by the Africans. Muhamad wrote in similar terms to the Walies of Merida and Saragossa, as well as to the Alcaldes of the frontiers.

But now was it found that all those commanders had excuses and good reasons to allege, by the force of which they were prevented from complying with that request; all declined obedience to the orders thus received; and the people, finding that no succours arrived, began to vituperate Muhamad Ben Hixem as they had vituperated Abderahman Ben Almanzor; but of Muhamad they furthermore declared that his good fortune had abandoned him from the moment that he had allied himself with Infidels; nor could they sufficiently anathematize him for that cause.

Well hath it been said, that the love and esteem of the people goes and comes with the breezes of fortune—they neither approve nor condemn the actions of those they judge; but as these are successful or unsuccessful, so do they applaud or vituperate. The base and bad man who conquers, is a hero; the great and good one who is conquered becomes the object of their scorn—he is the basest of wretches, and worthy of nothing better than the gibbet.

The African light companies soon approached within a short distance of Cordova; and immediately after this fact became known, it was remarked that many of the most

influential among the citizens had disappeared from the city. These were presently found to have passed over to the camp of Suleiman Ben Alhakem. Muhamad now perceived that his fortune was deserting him: he saw that in proportion as his own party diminished did that of his enemy increase: even his guard had fallen into discord and was divided by factions. The Slavonian Wadha El Alameri availed himself of that occasion to augment the fears of his lord, who, destitute of good counsel, no longer knew what to determine or to whom he could have recourse. He insinuated suspicions of secret conspiracy, giving Muhamad more serious cause than had before existed to distrust his guards. Finally, this Hagib, finding himself to be absolute master in Cordova, and perceiving the vacillation of Muhamad Ben Hixem, persuaded the latter to make known the existence of Hixem El Muyad Billah; and, without waiting an especial mandate from him to that effect, he drew the concealed king from his prison, and presented him to the people in the Macsura or Royal Tribune of the Great Aljama. This was done on the 7th day of the moon Dylhagia, in the year 400.

All the city was in commotion as the rumour went abroad that their King, Hixem Ben Alhakem, was still in life; and when they saw standing before their eyes him whom they had followed to the tomb, all the past seemed to be but as a dream. An immense concourse of people collected before the mosque; and when the Slavonian Wadha El Alameri brought out their king and placed him before them, they received him with the most hearty demonstrations of joy, and accompanied him with unceasing outcries of applause and jubilation even to his palace.

Muhamad Ben Hixem had meanwhile concealed himself in a remote apartment of that building, confiding in the Slavonian Wadha, and hoping that all would eventually be well with him; but on the day of the Easter of Victims, which was the 10th of Dylhagia, he was led by the Slavonian Anbaro to the foot of the throne—that throne which he had himself so recently occupied, but on which the legitimate King, Hixem El Muyad Billah, had just taken his seat. He was then reproached with much asperity by Hixem, who exclaimed, "Now shalt thou taste the bitter

fruit of thy disloyalty and unmeasured ambition;" that said, the king commanded the executioner to take off his head, which was done, when, being placed on a pike, the dis-severed head was carried by a Vizier through the streets of the capital at the speed of a horse, the body being cast into the public square, after having been cut into many pieces, which were gathered up on the expiration of the third day, and were then buried in the court of a mosque. The head of Muhamad was ultimately sent by King Hixem to his rival, Suleiman Ben Alhaken, who was then at Citawa, and whom the king hoped to intimidate by that example, thereby inducing him to return to his allegiance.

The time during which Muhamad Ben Hixem held command, from the moment of his revolt to that of his decapitation, was sixteen months: of this period he had spent six at Toledo, and six more had been passed in contentions with Suleiman Ben Alhakem, who had been as long either in the Comarcas of Cordova or in the capital itself. After the battle of Acbat Albocar, Muhamad, who had previously called himself El Mohdi Billah, was named Adafir, and was also known as Abul Walid. The mother that bore him was called Mozna, and he had a son named Abdallah, who died before him and left no posterity.

The head of his enemy, even Muhamad Ben Hixem, was received by Suleiman Ben Alhakem as a most precious gift, and knowing the preparations making at Toledo by the Wali Obeidala, son of Muhamad, for marching against him, he took advantage of that present to excite a new enemy against King Hixem and his Cordovans: commanding the head of Muhamad to be embalmed, he sent it to Obeidala, with ten thousand mitcals of gold, and a letter wherein he wrote him an account of all that had taken place in the capital, adding, "Thus doth King Hixem repay those who serve him and restore him to his throne: beware of falling into the hands of that ungrateful and cruel tyrant; but if thou art seeking a companion in thy vengeance, him thou shalt find in Suleiman Ben Alhakem."

Obeidala received the mournful gift, with the letter by which it was accompanied, and which produced all the effect that Suleiman had desired: he was filled with a furious anger, and having interred the head of his father, Muhamad

Ben Hixem, with great pomp in the court of the principal mosque, he wrote letters to Suleiman, in which he accepted his offers of friendship, and vowed an eternal hatred to King Hixem El Muyad Billah.

On the 7th day of the moon of Giumada Primera there died at Cordova the Cadi of the Aljama, Ahmed Ben Abdelmelic Ben Haxem, a man of extraordinary wisdom and rectitude. The Hagib of King Hixem Ben Alhakem, Wadha El Alameri, was present at his burial, which took place in the Macbora or cemetery of Coraixi; the prayer was made for him by the Cadi Abu Becri Ben Wafid, and the ablutions of the dead were performed by Abu Omar Ben Aff: all the inhabitants of the city attending the remains of Ahmed Ben Abdelmelic to the place of their repose.

In the year 401, and on the night of Thursday the 19th day of the moon of Giumada Primera, there also died the learned Yahye Ben Amer Ben Husein Ben Nabil of Cordova, a sage who had travelled much in the East. He had been chosen a member of the council of state by the intervention of the Cadi Abul Abes Ben Dhacuen, and was buried with great pomp in the Farenic Macbora after the prayer of Alazar.

CHAP. CVIII.—OF THE SIEGE OF CORDOVA, THE ENTRANCE OF THE HAGIB WADHA EL ALAMARI INTO MEDINA TOLEDO, AND THAT OF SULEIMAN BEN ALHAKEM INTO CORDOVA.

KING Hixem confirmed the Slavonian Wadha in his office of Hagib, and that general made several sallies against the Africans commanded by Suleiman Ben Alhakem, in all of which he obtained the advantage; but knowing that the Wali Obeidala was about to join his forces, which formed a select and well-appointed army, to those of Suleiman, he committed the government and defence of the capital to the two generals, Zabor and Anbaro, who were, like himself, Slavonians, while he proceeded to the territory of Toledo, hoping to arrest the march of Obeidala, and demanding aid

for that purpose from the people on the frontiers of Castile as well as from the King of the Christians. From the latter he received a reply to the effect that Suleiman Ben Alhakem had given the Christian six fortresses on condition of receiving aid at his hands, but that as he would rather assist King Hixem El Muyad Billah than the rebel Suleiman, he would send auxiliaries to him instead, provided that he were assured of certain other fortresses which he named.

Hearing this, the Sclavonian Wadha did not await the decision of the king his master, but hastening to make his agreement with the Infidel, he assented to those conditions ; when the Christian auxiliaries immediately joined him. The Alameri then prepared for his attack on Toledo, whence the Wali Obeidala had already departed, and Wadha, having secret intelligence with certain of the inhabitants, soon obtained possession of the place.

Receiving an account of what had happened, Obeidala then returned to seek his enemies, and encountered the host of the Sclavonian general, with his Christian auxiliaries, in the vicinity of Maqueda. There they fought a sanguinary battle, wherein the forces of Obeidala were defeated and fled towards Cordova ; but, being closely pursued by the enemy, Obeidala, with many of his cavaliers, fell into the hands of Wadha El Alameri. Among those who were thus unfortunate were Muhamad Ben Temar and Ahmed Ben Muhamad Ben Wasim of Toledo, one of the most distinguished persons of that city, and a very learned man. That cavalier was nailed to a cross, whereon he repeated the Sura Yax, the soldiers cruelly wounding him in the face with their javelins until the head became detached from the stake, and, falling forwards, the unhappy noble then hung suspended by his girdle, in which condition he expired. This deplorable event took place, according to Abu Meruan Ben Hayan, in the moon of Regeb of the year 401 ; but according to other authorities, in the moon Xaban of the same year.

Obeidala was taken to Cordova under a strong guard, and had scarcely arrived there before the king commanded that he should be beheaded. That Wali was then in the

flower of his age ; and when the people heard that he had been taken while fighting against the Christians, they vituperated the Hagib Wadha El Alameri with bitter violence, and murmuring against King Hixem and his generals, they called them heretics and bad Moslemah.

The government of Toledo had been meanwhile entrusted by the Hagib Wadha to Abu Isnael Dilnoun, a very powerful Xequé and noble of that city, who, by his authority and influence, had facilitated the entrance of the Hagib therein. Having thus taken measures for the tranquillity of the place, the Sclavonian Wadha, well satisfied with his success, dismissed his Christian auxiliaries with many gifts, and promises in still greater abundance ; after which he returned to Cordova. He was there received with much honour by the king, who granted him many favours for his Sclavonians and Alamerics, on whom he conferred Alcaidias and other offices in the south of Spain,—as for example the governments of Tadmír, Cartagena, Alálfé, Alicant, Almeria, Denie, Xativa, and others ; those who already held appointments of importance he confirmed in their charge.

But Suleiman and his Africans continued in the vicinity of Cordova, where they committed grievous devastations, cutting up the fields around Ecija, Carmona, and other towns on the shores of the Guadalquivér. The Hagib Wadha therefore sent his Sclavonian generals Zabor and Anbaró to engage the Africans, whom their troops encountered with varying fortunes for some time, but finally succeeded in driving them from the Guadalquivér and forcing them to take refuge in the mountains. Some relief was thereby given to the capital, which had already begun to feel the want of provisions very grievously, the people having long suffered cruel hunger, which at length caused a pestilence that kept all in terror of contagion.

In the year 401, on a Thursday, which was the 21st of the moon Dylcada, the Hafiz Obeidala El Moaiti of Cordova, called Abu Meruan, departed from this life. He was buried in the cemetery of the suburb, the prayer being said for him by his uncle, Obeidala Ben Abdallah, who performed that office at the request of the Cadi Ben Wefid.

This Hafiz was of the noble race of Omeya* Ben Abd Shems.

In the same year of 401, on a Sunday, which was the 11th of the moon Dylcada, died Ahmed Ben Aly Arabai El Begani, who had been reader in the Aljama of Cordova. This Ahmed Ben Aly had been chosen by the Hagib Almanzor as the preceptor of his son Abderahman, and was subsequently made a Cadi. King Hixem El Muyad Billah afterwards appointed him a member of the Council of State, where he became the associate of the Cadi Abu Beeri Ben Wefid. The year of his birth was 345.

On the night between Wednesday and Thursday, towards the close of the moon Dylcada in the same year, died also the noble cavalier Ahmed Ben Muhamad Ben Ahmed Ben Said, known as Aben Gezir El Omayya, who had been Alchatib of the Cadi Mondhir El Boluti: he died of the pestilence then prevailing, at his palace of Moquciz, wherein he made his dwelling; and his bier was accompanied to the burial place by all the nobles of the city. At the beginning of that same moon had died the Prefect of the Builders, Abdallah Ben Said Ben Muhamad Ben Batri. To him were entrusted all things connected with the architecture of the Aljama and royal residences of the capital. He was, besides, Sahib Xarta of the city, and had ever enjoyed the favour of the kings, by whom his wisdom and integrity had caused Abdallah Ben Said to be much valued.

Now Suleiman Ben Alhakem had not remained unacquainted with the state of things in Cordova; he knew the discontent occasioned among the nobles by the undue influence conceded to the Slavonians and Alamerics; they it was that enjoyed all the confidence of the king, who distrusted his own kindred, and put no faith in his most loyal servants. Determined that he would not lose so favourable an opportunity, Suleiman therefore wrote to the Walies of Calatrava, Guadalaxara, Medina, Selim, and Saragossa, declaring to them that if they would give him aid against the Slavonians, who were exercising a tyrannical sway at

* Of this house of Moaiti, the Arabian genealogists count up to sixteen ancestors in direct line—son following father without any interval in the succession.—*Condé*.

Cordova and in other cities of the kingdom, he would for his part assure them of their continuance in their governments, and not only so, but would cause those offices to descend by right of inheritance to their sons. The Walies thus appealed to were by that last promise assured of obtaining a concession which many of those ambitious rulers had long desired, and they made an agreement with Suleiman accordingly, sending him their banners without delay, and each being accompanied by a well-appointed force of foot and horse.

These things being made known to the Hagib Wadha El Alameri, and he, finding that the Walies of eastern Spain were about to march against him, made the king acquainted with these preparations for war, and the great movements then effecting in the provinces: he furthermore persuaded Hixem to write letters to Aly Ben Hamud, the Wali of Cebla and Tunis, as also to his brother Alcasim, Wali of Algezira Alhadra, whom he knew to be at variance with Suleiman Ben Alhakem, offering them great concessions and advantages of various kinds if they would come to his aid with all their power; nay, the Hagib even prevailed on King Hixem to promise that in the event of their ensuring to him the triumph which he desired to obtain over his foes, he would cause the elder of the two brothers, even Aly Ben Hamud, to be declared his successor to the throne.

Yet, when these letters were written, the Hagib did not send them, but kept them for some more opportune occasion — perhaps because he was himself somewhat doubtful of the measure, although it was he who had proposed it.

The year 402 passed over the heads of the Andalusians who continued in the endurance of very cruel sufferings from the ravages of the pestilence, as well as from the trials and afflictions of civil war: provisions were fast failing in the capital, misfortunes of all kinds were accumulating, and the discontent of the people increased in equal proportion. The populace, ever ready to murmur against the government, were rendered furious and unmanageable by all these calamities, and such of the inhabitants as were able to quit Cordova, did so, flying to

the mountains, or taking refuge in the smaller towns, as the case might be.

By means of these fugitives and by others of which he had contrived to obtain possession, Sulciman Ben Alhakem had meanwhile maintained an exchange of letters with certain of the more influential inhabitants; nay, some authorities affirm that even the Hagib Wadha himself was one among them; but this does not appear to be credible. Yet the King Hixem Ben Alhakem was assured that such was the case; and it was furthermore declared to him that his Slavonian Hagib meditated the surrender of the city to his enemies. Then the unhappy Hixem, who believed all and feared all, caused the loyal Hagib to be thrown into prison. Immediately afterwards, those letters which the king had written, as above related, to the governor of Cebeda and Algezira, were found to be still in Wadha's possession, and the hapless Hixem commanded that the head of his faithful servant should be struck off; thus forgetting in a moment of anger all the devotion and good service of so many years.

The king then named Hairan, the governor of Almeria, his Hagib; and as that general was a man of much prudence and valour, he was perhaps better calculated for the office thus conferred on him than any other noble then about the person of the monarch, whom he might have saved had the good fortune of that ill-fated prince not been now arrived at its close. Hairan was of the Slavonian Alimeries, as the Hagib Wadha had been, and was the last of them who served King Hixem.

Algasenia, an accomplished poetess of Bagena, composed a long Casida of elegant verses in praise of Hairan Lord of Almeria and Hagib to King Hixem El Muyad Billah; these she presented to the general about this time, and they were very highly applauded by the distinguished spirits of the day.

Of a most benign and generous disposition, the new Hagib frequently prevented the fulfilment of the tyrannous orders issued by the king, who felt distrust of all the principal men of the city, and would not permit them to assemble in any place but the mosques, suspecting conspiracies in the most innocent meetings of the nobles. But

this oppression of his subjects, and the discontent which Hixem thus awakened in their hearts, was most favourable to Suleiman Ben Alhakem, who had long occupied Medina Azahrah with a numerous host, and now kept the capital closely besieged.

The Hagib Hairan was meanwhile doing his best to animate the guards and other troops to the defence of their king and the city; yet his efforts and exhortations produced but little effect. He performed his part as a good general should; but a city which does not care to defend itself is not easily to be preserved. One day, while Hairan, with his guards, was fighting at the gate of the Axarquía, and labouring to disperse a body of the Africans who were filling up the trenches, there arose a dispute between the inhabitants of the city and the troops still remaining faithful to the king, who were defending the second gate, but whom the traitors were then attacking with all the force they could assemble. Informed of this perilous disorder, the Hagib was compelled to abandon the important post which he was maintaining, for the purpose of repressing the rioters; since the royal troops and the people were performing the office of the enemy by cutting each other to pieces.

While Hairan was thus employed, admission was given to the besiegers by those who favoured them within the walls; the general then hastened with his guards to attempt their expulsion, and, opposing their entrance step by step, a sanguinary contest ensued, which did not close till night-fall, when the troops of Suleiman had obtained possession of all the towers and forts around the capital. The brave and faithful Hairan fell wounded among the few loyal and valiant cavaliers of Cordova, who were still animated by his example, and had resolved to die in their duty, when the Africans made themselves masters of the city.

But not long did the traitors who had delivered up their trust escape the punishment due to that treachery: the Africans and their auxiliaries made a cruel slaughter among the citizens, without respect to friends or foes, and for three days they sacked the place, paying no regard to the representations of those who, having been of their party, had hoped to profit by the treachery they had favoured, even

when taking no actual part in the matter. Frightful cruelties were committed on all sides. The learned and eloquent orator, Muhamad Casim El Halati, was inhumanly murdered in his own house, as was Chalef Ben Salema Ben Chamis of Cordova, one of the Odules or sworn judges of the city, he also being assassinated in his chamber, and subsequently buried, without attendance or prayer, in the Macbora of Ben Abbas.

On the same day, Abu Salema El Zahid, Imaum of the Mosque of Ain Tar, was cut to pieces in his dwelling; and the wise Ayoub Ruch Bono, with Said Ben Mondhir, son of the Cadi of the Aljama, was likewise cruelly murdered; Muhamad Ben Abi Siar, a Slavonian of the king's guard, then lying sick in his house, met the same fate, as did Abdallah Ben Husein, called El Garbali, an eminent architect of Cordova, who had constructed many splendid edifices and royal dwellings therein, with other buildings, all contributing to the public utility and convenience; he also having been cut to pieces by those barbarians in their horrible irruption into the capital, which took place on a most unfortunate Monday, the 6th day of the moon Xawal in the year 403. Nay El Badalyosi has even affirmed that the remains of Abdallah Ben Husein remained three days without burial, and that the body was at length taken to Macbora Om Salema, where the remnants of his household yet living buried it without ablution, without a shroud, and without prayer; so great was the confusion and horror into which the afflicted people of Cordova were thrown by the murders, plunder, and violence of every kind to which they were subjected in those days of judgment.

No sooner had his troops entered the city, than Suleiman Ben Alhakem took possession of the Alcazar, at whose gate it was that the Hagib Hairan El Alameri had fallen wounded. Being covered by the corpses of other brave and noble cavaliers who had fallen with him, the general was sheltered from further injury, and lay there insensible among the dead; but in the course of the night his senses returned, and he found strength to free himself from the weight by which he was at once protected and oppressed. The soldiers, busied with their plunder, did not remark the figure thus rising from a heap of corpses,

and the mangled commander having become sensible to the realities of his position, continued to drag himself from the bodies around him, and at length reached a place of shelter which he found in the house of a poor but honourable citizen, where he remained unknown to all, and in that concealment was cured of his wounds.

Sulciman Ben Allhakem was soon proclaimed king, with the title of Adofar Bihulallah. The Slavonians and other honourable servants of King Hixem made supplication for their lord to the conqueror: but what he did with that hapless prince was not known, nor has it even yet been ascertained with certainty, since he never was seen again either living or dead; neither did Hixem leave any succession, unless it were that of calamities and civil discords. The barbarians assassinated many noble Xeques in their dwellings; and, in addition to those already enumerated, may be mentioned the Slavonian Muhamad Ben Zeyad, who had been a closely familiar friend of King Hixem. Those murderous wretches even burst into the harems of the principal inhabitants of Cordova,—and that profanation rendered them more odious than all their cruelties had done.

CHAP. CIX.—OF THE GOVERNMENT OF KING SULEIMAN BEN ALIAKEM,
OF THE NEW CIVIL WAR, AND OF OTHER EVENTS.

TRANQUILITY having been restored in the capital, King Suleiman dismissed his auxiliaries, towards whom he fulfilled all his promises, and they departed to their respective countries well content. He next deposed a large number of the Alamerics from their employments and offices, which he gave to the Xeques and generals of his African Cabilas. He caused his father, Alhakem Ben Abderahman Anasir, who had been Wali of Cebta in the earlier part of King Hixem's reign, but had retired into a solitary place, where he passed his time in prayer, to be summoned to Cordova, and appointed his brother Abderahman to the government

of Seville. Suleiman confirmed in his office as Cadi of Cebta that illustrious Jusuf Ben Hamud El Sadfi, so much renowned for his genius and erudition. Jusuf Ben Hamud was a native of Cebta, and in a garden which he cultivated with his own hands he is said to have had every kind of plant then known, with many which had never then been produced by any but himself.

To the Ilagib Almanzor Abu Mozni Zawi Ben Zeiri Ben Menad of Sanhaga, Suleiman gave the government of Garnata, and rewarded the services of the general Abu Giafar Ahmed Ben Said, known as Araub, by conferring on him that of Santamaria of Algarve, which Santamaria is a port of Ocsonoba on the coast of the Western Ocean;—at a word, King Suleiman bestowed rewards on all his followers; and to many of them he gave possessions and offices which they were empowered to transmit by right of inheritance to their sons,* the king demanding only that the nobles thus endowed should do homage for the towns they held, should promise fidelity and obedience to his dynasty, and should repair to his aid with their forces when called on to do so.

Six Cabilas or tribes of Africans received allotments of territory as above described, and these were raised by the chiefs of those tribes into independent sovereignties, as we shall see hereafter.

In the year 404 Aslao Ben Razin rebuilt and peopled the fortress and town of Santamaria in the east, which, from his name, was thenceforth called Santamaria de Aben Razin.

Among the unhappy chances of this period was that which befel the wise and learned man Raxid Ben Ibrahim of Cordova, who dwelt on the great square, and belonged to the mosque of Lait. Endeavouring to escape from the barbarians who were plundering the city, Raxid Ben Ibrahim departed from Cordova during the sack, and took his way

* These concessions of governments to be held in perpetuity, by diminishing the power of the sovereignty as they did, were the first cause of the division, decadence, and ultimate ruin of the country;—but the custom prevailed at that time throughout Europe, as our readers will remember.—*Condé*.

towards the north, but was overtaken on the road, and put to death with circumstances of indescribable atrocity.

The Sclavonian Hairan El Alameri lay, meanwhile, concealed in the capital until he had been cured of his wounds, when he secretly went forth and reached Auriola, without having encountered the enemies who were seeking him. There he found shelter among his friends and partizans, by whom he was enabled not only to attain his own city of Almeria, but also to take with him a considerable force of troops, with some treasure. The Wali who had been appointed in his place, even Alafia Ben Ahmed, resisted the entrance of Hairan, and defended himself in his Alcazar during twenty days ; but the palace was taken by force, and the unhappy general was thrown into the sea, with all his children.

In the year 405, Hairan passed from Almeria to Cebta, where Aly Ben Hamud was governor, and that noble he persuaded to take part with him in seeking vengeance for the deposition and suspected death of the King Hixem Ben Alhakem. The proposals of Hairan were to the effect that Aly should assemble his forces, which he should unite with those of Hairan and of his own brother Alcasim Ben Hamud, lord of Algezira Alhadra, by whose aid and that of other Alameries, Governors, and Alcaides of fortresses in the south of Spain, they might hope to drive Suleiman Ben Alhakem from Cordova, seeing that he was reigning there not with the consent of the Andalusians, but against their wish.

Hairan spoke with much warmth concerning the wrongs of the unhappy King Hixem Ben Alhakem, quoting the letters which Hixem had caused to be written to Aly Ben Hamud and his brother Alcasim, calling them to his aid, and offering them the succession to the throne, of all which Hairan could speak with effect, as being one who had intimate knowledge of everything connected with the matter. Furthermore, and as if the unfortunate Hixem had been still living—although it is more than probable that he had then ceased either to hope or fear—Hairan described the indignities of his imprisonment and the constant danger to which he was exposed while permitted to remain in

the hands of so cruel an enemy as was Suleiman Ben Alhakem. In the name of his sovereign, therefore, he entreated Aly Ben Hamud not to lose a moment, but at once to attempt his deliverance, adding, that even though they might not arrive in time to effect the saving of his life, they should in any case be ready to avenge the obscure and unmerited death which his enemies had inflicted on him, and which it more particularly belonged to them to do, as being descendants of the same illustrious race with the hapless king.

Incited by the words of Hairan, and by his gratitude to King Hixem, the noble general Aly Ben Hamud, who was of his nature a most compassionate and generous youth, determined to bestir himself in behalf of the deposed monarch, and if he were not permitted to deliver him from the foes into whose hands he had fallen, yet to avenge his innocent blood: he therefore united himself with Hairan, and, conjointly with that general, he wrote letters to his brother Alcasim Ben Hamud, exhorting him to assemble his forces for the purpose of uniting with the Alamerics of Andalusia in their attempt to deliver or avenge the oppressed King Hixem Ben Alhakem.

Furnished with these letters, Hairan then departed from Cepta, and sailed for Algezira Alhadra, where he was presented on his disembarkation with a copy of very elegant verses by the renowned poet Abu Amer Ben Deragh, to whom Hairan made the royal gift of one hundred and fifty miteals of gold for the same.

On the part of Alcasim Ben Hamud the Slavonian general found no difficulty,—on the contrary, that Ameer entered into the alliance proposed to him with all his heart, assembled the flower of his troops, and being joined by those of his brother Aly, which arrived from Cobta and Tangiers, he took possession of Medina Malaga in concert with the Slavonian Hairan, although the Alcaido of that city, Amer Ben Feth, did his utmost to oppose their enterprise.

The purpose of these allies was now made public: they declared their determination to restore their legitimate sovereign Hixem Ben Alhakem Ben Abderahman Anasir to the throne of Spain, and called on all good Moslemah

to bear part in that undertaking. The Alamerics agreed to place themselves entirely under the guidance of the illustrious Aly Ben Hamud, whom they elected the leader of all, and so they joined their banners, in the hope of a successful war.

All the towns of the empire were now thrown into commotion, and the report of this important enterprise was presently sounding throughout broad Spain.

About this time a company of the citizens of Alisbona, in number about eighty men, and all friends among themselves, being of one tribe, embarked to seek new lands in the midst of the Atlantic Ocean, but they found it impossible to get beyond certain islands, where they were attacked by an uncountable number of hawks; nay, by the violence of those birds, they were prevented from passing the said islands; wherefore they returned to their city, relating marvellous things of the voyage they had made.* These men were thenceforward called the *Emprendadores* or adventurers, and gave name to that part of Alisbona in which they dwelt, seeing that it was thenceforward called the Calle or Street of the *Almogawares*.

Now Xerif Edris relates the matter above alluded to as follows:—He tells us that the *Almogawares* departed in ships from Medina Alisbona, embarking on the great ocean from the desire they had to know what might be found therein; and he repeats what has been said above, to wit that the part of Alisbona near *Alhama Darab*, being that wherein these adventurous mariners dwelt, received its name from them and retained it from that time,—nay, still bears the same even to these latter days. He then proceeds to relate that they were originally eight men, the sons of eight brothers, and consequently cousins, who took on their own charges a ship of good burthen, and placing in it water and provisions sufficient for the consumption of several months, they then resigned themselves to the waves with the first breathings of the east wind.

* In this relation, and that which follows, the Translator has been careful to preserve in all its simplicity the account given by these early Arabic authors (some writing about 980 of our era) of the maritime enterprise thus early undertaken by the Portuguese.

When they had navigated about eleven days, they came to a portion of the sea where there were heavy currents, with thick and troubled waters of a dark colour. There these mariners were seized with fear, and turning their sails to the other side, they steered for twelve days in a southerly direction until they came to an island which they named the Isle of Flocks,—and it was so called by them on account of the herds of cattle, numerous beyond counting, which they found on that island, such flocks being without shepherds or any other men to give them tendance.

Having reached this island and disembarked thereon, they first discovered a fountain of pure running water, with a wild fig-tree growing over it. Pausing here, they took of those flocks, and, dividing the meat, made ready to eat thereof, seathing and roasting the same at their pleasure; but the taste was so bitter, that no man could endure to retain it in his mouth,—wherefore they did but keep the skins of these animals, and, departing from the island, continued their course, still with a southerly wind, and for yet twelve days.

They then discovered another island, on which they might perceive habitations of men and many fields under culture of the plough. They steered towards the place, proposing to ascertain the extent of it, and what might be found therein, but had not proceeded far before they were met by numerous Zawarkas or barks strongly manned, and by these their ship was taken, they being at the same time made captive, and conducted to a city which was situated on the coast of the sea.

Having been landed, they perceived that the men were somewhat red of hue and tall of stature, with long hair, of which, however, they had but little; their women these mariners judged to possess great beauty, insomuch that they were in amaze thereat.

The inhabitants of the city kept their prisoners shut up during three days, at the end of which time there came a man who could speak their tongue, and he enquired who they were, to what end they had come thither, and where the country of their abode was situate. They then related to him all that has been told above, and he pro-

mised them security for their lives, with a fortunate issue to their enterprise.

On the second day from that of this man's visit, they were presented to the king of the island, who asked them questions similar to those which had previously been put by the interpreter, when they replied that they had set forth on the great sea incited by the wish to discover such wonderful things as might be contained therein, and with the intention of proceeding to the extremities of the same.

When the king heard that, he smiled, and commanded the interpreter to tell those merchants that the late king his father had sent certain of his vassals to examine the great sea, as they were proposing to do, but that even after those men had navigated through the wide extent thereof during many months, they could come to no end, and even found that the light was failing them,—wherefore they had been compelled to return without having made any profit of their voyage. The king then bade his interpreter to offer the voyagers assurance of security on his part, and give them good hope for the future.

They were then taken back to their prison, where they remained until the west wind blew, when the people of the country put them into Zawarkas, bound their eyes so that they could not see the direction in which they were proceeding, and navigated with them in that condition during many days.

"Thus voyaging in the company of those men all these days, with their nights," relate the mariners, "we came at length to a strand, on which they disembarked us all, and having tied our hands behind our backs, they left us thus on the shore. We remained there in much anxiety, being, moreover, greatly oppressed by our bonds, until the day-break (which followed soon after we had been thus abandoned) was succeeded by the rising of the sun, when we heard a sound resembling that of human voices. We then all cried aloud with one consent, and the noise we thus made having been a very loud one, certain men who chanced to be within hearing of that place were made aware of our presence, and came towards the spot whence our cries had

proceeded. Finding us in that unhappy plight, they then freed us from our ligaments, and asked us of our state. To all which we made answer in their tongue, for these men were men of Barbary. One of them then enquired of us, "Do you know how far your land is from ours?" and we replied that we did not; whereupon he said, "Then between your land and ours there is the voyage of two months." The leader of these men then exclaimed, "Wasafi!" which is as much as to say, what a misfortune: wherefore from that time this shore was called by us Asafi. It is a port or landing-place on the sea at the extremity of Magrob."

So much do we find related in respect to that navigation on the great sea. We now return to the affairs of Suleiman Ben Alhakem. When the reports of what was doing on the coast reached Cordova, they did not fail to cause him heavy cares: he wrote to his generals, and sent envoys to his allies. Some have affirmed that he then put to death the deposed King Hixem Ben Alhakem El Muyad Billah, suspecting him of being the prime mover in those troubles; but God alone knows the truth of that matter; all that can with certainty be averred is, that nothing more was ever heard of King Hixem after the third entry of Suleiman Ben Alhakem into Cordova.

Not desiring to await his enemies in the capital, Suleiman's first orders were for the assembling of his cavalry, and with that force he left the city, remitting the government thereof to his father Alhakem Ben Abderahman, although the old man was very reluctant to accept the charge, and more than once refused to undertake it.

The general Hairan El Alameri had meanwhile repaired to Almunceaub with the troops which he had gathered from Almeria, and was there joined by Aly Ben Hamud, with those of Cebta and Tangiers; the people of Malaga and Algezira, with those of their Comarcas, also proceeding to the same point of union, seeing that Almunceaub is at equal distance from Almeria and Malaga. Here, when the banners had all assembled, the leaders bound themselves by a vow to restore the dethroned monarch Hixem El Muyad Billah to the seat of his fathers, and to obey him, the son of their ancient lords, as the only true sovereign of Spain.

This was done with much solemnity in the presence of the congregated troops, because there was much distrust among them; and in discourse with each other, the soldiers freely declared that their generals were moving not for King Hixem, but for their own particular interest, and to avenge their private wrongs.

To the very confines of Almunceaub, where the army of Aly Ben Hamud and his allies were thus preparing for action, came Suleiman Ben Alhakem with a flying camp of carefully selected cavalry, when several skirmishes ensued between the advanced parties of either army, both sides fighting with much bravery and various fortunes.

It was the desire of Suleiman Ben Alhakem to avoid a general engagement, and he took much pains to do so, unwilling to encounter the large force of the allies in a pitched battle; he hoped, indeed, that the delays thus ensuing would diminish the fervour by which they were animated, and trusted to time for the breaking-up of their union, seeing that such dissolution is the most frequent result of alliances thus formed.

But the wise and experienced Hairan divining his purpose, was equally anxious to bring him to battle; and Aly Ben Hamud, prudently accepting the advice of his older ally, did his best to produce that result; wherefore they did at length find means, though not without great difficulty and many stratagems, to compel their adversary to open fight—power against power,—when a sanguinary combat ensued, with incalculable loss to both armies. This took place towards the close of the year 406.

About this time, the Wali of Denia, Mugehid Edim Ben Abdallah Alameri, known as Abu Geix El Muafek, a crafty, yet very brave and enterprising man, who had been much in the confidence of the Hagib Abderahman, the son of Almanzor, finding the state of things in Spain thus disturbed, prepared a large and well-appointed fleet, with which he set sail for the islands of Yebizas* and Mayorca, well furnished with troops, part of which were his own, but which he had in part taken into his pay from other banners.

* Iviça.

Mugehid Edim then succeeded in obtaining possession of the islands, which he fortified strongly and effectually, and secured his hold thereon.

Now, in departing from his government of Denia, Mugehid Edim had appointed a substitute to himself and a leader of his people in Abdallah Ben Obeidala Ben El Walid Ben Jusuf Ben Abdallah Ben Abdelaziz Ben Amru Ben Otman Ben Muhamad Ben Chalid Ben Ocba Ben Abi Moati Ben Aban Ben Anmir Ben Omeya Ben Abdxemsi, known as El Moati of Cordova, a man of the most illustrious nobility, of distinguished learning, and possessing a good genius. He had been a disciple of Muhamad El Begi and other sages; and being thus appointed governor of Denia, the people of eastern Spain revering him for his excellencies and honouring the nobility of his race, not only obeyed the command of Mugehid Edim in paying to his orders the respect due to those of Mugehid himself, but finally placed themselves under his exclusive allegiance, making the Chotba for him in all the Abninbares; nay, Abdallah Ben Obeidala, thus encouraged, assumed all the insignia of sovereignty, and struck coins with his own impress. The elevation and reign of this Moati, with other events of similar character, might almost cause a doubt whether the affairs of men be ruled by destiny and immutable necessity, or be not rather left to chance and suffered to revolve without a providence, which last is not credible. God alone is able to answer this question.

Abu Meruan Ben Hayau relates that the wise Muhamad El Begi one day said to this Moati, who was his disciple, "Do not give way to thy passions, Oh Coreixi, and let not the temptations of command and the glitter of mundane vanities bewilder or dazzle thy judgment: accept not the charges of empire, if such should be offered thee. May Allah preserve thy life from the troubles that these bring with them."

Remaining thoughtful for some time, and as if displeased by what his master had said to him, El Moati enquired, "Wherefore dost thou speak to me thus, and whence dost thou know that I require this exhortation? Yet since thou hast begun, I adjure thee to inform me

clearly, and say all thy purpose, as God shall prosper thee."

To this Muhamad replied, "Yea, with perfect clearness and in a good hour, according to the Divine will, shalt thou hear all my thoughts. I was in a dream, and I saw thee therein, for behold there was a blooming and very vigorous vine, around which rose a bright flaming fire, which burnt around it for a long time without doing the noble tree any wrong, but eventually consumed it, and the vine became dust and ashes.

"This fire is the civil discord which is even now kindling around us, and cannot fail to rise into flames; the blooming vine is thyself; but the end of things is known to God alone."

To these words El Moati made answer and said, "God deliver us from such evils as these that thou hast fore-shadowed."

But some forty years afterwards, Time having passed on his way, the course of events fully justified the explanation which Muhamad El Begi had given to his dream.

In the year 407, Mugehid Edim departed from Mayorca and repaired in his ships to the great island of the Christians, called Sardinia, taking in his company the African Thabit El Guageni, a wise astrologer, and having landed in that island he took the greater portion of it by force of arms, making himself master of nearly all the fortresses thereof.

In the year 407, the war between Suleiman and the allied forces of Hairan, Aly, and Alcasim, was continued with various fortunes, the towns and populations meanwhile suffering cruelly from their incursions and the excesses of the soldiery, insomuch that all were living in fear and disquietude.

Suleiman was anxious to obtain an increase of his army from Cordova and its Comarcas; but the few troops sent him served without zeal or good will of any kind, whole companies of them going over to the enemy before his eyes. His former allies from the frontier of eastern Spain excused themselves with various pretexts, and none came to his aid. All the host of Suleiman Ben Alhakem was thus formed of

Africans and the cavalry of Merida, Carmona, Ecija, and Seville, with the people of Algarve, these forces being led by his brother Abderahman, by Abu Giafar, Wali of Santamaria, and by the Wali of Merida, Abu Othman Said Ben Haraun. The enemies of Suleiman did not neglect to foment and encourage the disobedience and discontent prevailing in the various provinces, and sought to do him injury in every manner that they could devise.

And now, after many skirmishes and combats of comparatively slight importance, the two hosts met in the Comarca of Medina Talca, which is in the territory of Seville, when, as of one accord, they commenced a furious battle. The Africans fought with a barbarous valour, enforced by the example of their intrepid leaders, and above all by that of their king, Suleiman Ben Alhakem, who went raging like a maddened lion through the hottest of the fight. But yielding at length to the superiority of numbers, he began to retire as the day drew near its close, withdrawing his troops in good order, and proposing to reach the fortress, there to take shelter for the night, when he was suddenly attacked by the greater portion of his own men. The soldiers had been induced to that mutiny by the shameless treason of their Andalusian officers, who followed the breath of fortune: and that inconstant one, according to her usual practice, had that day abandoned Suleiman Ben Alhakem for ever. Thus the two brothers, their horses lying dead beneath them, and themselves covered with wounds, were surrounded by the boldest of their enemies, and fell almost expiring into their hands. At that time there lay by the side of Suleiman, bravely fighting for whom they had sacrificed their lives, his faithful vizier, Ahmed Ben Said, lord of Santamaria, in Algarve, with his son-in-law, Said Ben Haraun of Merida; other cavaliers of Algarve, who had also kept their faith to their lord, very narrowly escaping the same fate. The field remained concealed beneath the corpses of the slain for a vast distance.

On the following day, the victors entered Seville without any resistance, and continuing their march from that city, they took possession of Cordova with equal facility. The old man Alhakem Ben Abderahman, being made acquainted

by the fugitive Africans with the misfortunes of his sons, had no wish to restrain the triumphant course of Aly Ben Hamud, the avenger, nor any power to do so, even had he felt the wish.

No sooner had the allies entered Cordova, than Aly Ben Hamud made himself master of the Alcazar, took the Wali Alhakem Ben Abderahman prisoner, and commanded that his two sons Suleiman and Abderahman should be brought to his presence, although they were then dying of the many and grave wounds they had received in the battle. Aly then enquired of the noble old chief, and said, "Oh, man of many days, what hast thou done with the King Hixem, and whither hast thou borne him?" Whereunto the old man answered that he knew nothing of the matter. Then said Aly, "Ye have put him to death." But Alhakem replied, "No, by Allah, that have we not; nor do we know whether he be living or dead, or where he now is." Thereupon Aly drew his sword, and said, "These heads do I offer to the vengeance of Hixem El Muyad Billah, and so do I fulfil my charge." Then Suleiman raised his eyes and said, "Let thy sword fall on mine alone, Aly Ben Hamud, for these my father and brother have done nothing to offend any man, or to merit death." But Aly disregarded his words, and with his own hand he beheaded them all three, removing each head by one firm and well-directed blow. The death of Suleiman, of Alhakem his father, and of his brother Abderahman, took place on a Sunday, the 20th of the moon of Moharram, in the year of the Hegira 407.

Aly now commanded that King Hixem should be sought with great care: and there was no apartment and no dungeon of the royal palaces and dwellings wherein he did not cause search to be made; but all this was only vain labour.—Hixem El Muyad Billah never appeared again either in life or as the dead, and his departure from this world was at length made public, giving occasion for the setting about among the people of many strange fables and groundless rumours.

CHAP. CX.—OF THE REIGN OF ALY BEN HAMUD.

By the counsels of Hairan Alameri the Slavonian, Aly Ben Hamud was now proclaimed in Cordova as King of Spain, with the titles of Motuakil Billah* and of Anasir Ledinallah,† that proclamation being made on the 13th day of Giumada Segunda, in the year 408.‡ The Chotba or public prayer was then made for their new sovereign in all the mosques; and Aly wrote to the Walies and Governors of provinces, making known to them that King Hixem El Muyad Billah had declared him successor to the throne before losing his liberty, and expressing his hope that they would come to his capital, as loyal subjects should do, to take the oath of fidelity and allegiance to his rule.

From the Walies of Seville, Toledo, Merida, and Saragossa, Aly Ben Hamud received no replies to his letters; a circumstance which caused the king to conceive much fear and distrust, more especially of the Alamerics. The Slavonian Hairan, moreover, made many extravagant demands on him, and appeared to believe that he was failing in the fulfilment of the conditions agreed on between them; wherefore, fearing that general's influence in Cordova, the King Aly Ben Hamud dismissed him from the Court, and commanded him to repair to his government of Almeria: but Hairan departed in great displeasure, offended, by that proceeding on the part of Aly Ben Hamud, and meditating revenge against the proud and ungrateful king.

Moved by these feelings, the Slavonian general incited other leaders to rebellion as he passed onwards to his government; and many of the Alamerics joining his party, Hairan entered into a conspiracy against Aly Ben Hamud, with the Alcaldes of Arjona, Jaen, and Baza, in conjunction with whom he wrote to Almondar, the Wali of Saragossa, exhorting him to unite with them for the purpose of driving Aly from the throne and restoring the same to the Omeyas, who were in fact the lawful heirs, and to whom

* Motuakil Billah—Confiding in God.

† Anasir Ledinallah, or Ledin Allah—Defender of the Law of God.

‡ A.D. 1018.

Aly Ben Hamud, in his treaty with the allied leaders, had promised the restitution of their just claims.

And now, to give their enterprise the more weight, and secure the consideration of the people, the Walies assembled in Guadix, where they took a solemn oath to maintain with all their power the war by which a legitimate prince of the house of Omeya, to whom all might pay a rightful obedience, should be placed on the throne of Cordova.

Such were the purposes which they publicly declared; but the stipulations secretly made and agreed to among them were of a less generous character: they were in fact more eagerly seeking their private interests than the general welfare, aiming at nothing less than the permanence and security of their governments and offices, each hoping to secure that which he held in his own family, and proposing to obtain their cities or provinces as the hereditary possession of their houses, in reward for the zeal they were displaying and the labours they were about to undertake.

With the plausible pretext set forth as above mentioned, the Walies assembled a large host, the natural love of the people for their ancient sovereigns causing all to hope that they might recover their previous calm and prosperity under the shadow and within the protection of their Omeyan princes.

Mulgehid Edim had meanwhile remained in possession of that large portion of the island of Sardinia which he had conquered; but he now found that his people were becoming weary of the war, of the unhealthy climate, and of the long absence they had endured from their beloved country. He perceived also that the popular voice, which had previously applauded him, was beginning to change; his followers were even heard to murmur at his ambition and covetousness, many of them saying, "This Ameer is not content with the riches and fertility of his own states, which are among the most delightful regions of Spain, and with the Yebisat Islands, but he must needs cross the sea, affronting all the great perils and perpetual changes of the inconstant waters for the purpose of making new acquisitions: but of all this what profit does there accrue to us, who follow his banners with so much labour and endanger our lives for

the furtherance of his rash and ambitious enterprises? What is our reward? To be the sport of death and the food of voracious beasts of prey.

These complaints of the discontented, which daily increased, did not fail to reach the ears of Mugehid; and their frequent repetition, with the arrival of the Christians, who came in large numbers with a well-appointed fleet, determined that leader to desist from his undertaking; wherefore, gathering together the riches, captives, and flocks which he had taken, he gave orders that all should be embarked for his return home.

But for that purpose he chose a haven very badly adapted to his intent, acting in this matter against the advice of Abu Charaub, the captain of his ships. The latter, moreover, assured him, as we are informed by Abu Feth El Thabit, who was present, that a great storm was threatening, and that it would be better to wait and offer battle to the Christians on land, than brave the fury of the tempestuous ocean; but the Ameer would not listen to his counsels, and all embarked as he had commanded.

Then did God call forth immediately a most fearful tempest of impetuous and contrary winds; waves rose up that were like mountains, the ships climbed at one moment as to the clouds, and were lost at the next in the abysses of the sea, which were seen foaming and of horrible aspect, but only by the terrible and fugitive lightnings, seeing that all heaven was veiled in darkness, while these were accompanied by frightful peals of thunder, and they, joining the perpetual roar of the raging sea, caused all hearts to tremble, when the dazzled eyes of the discouraged people could see nought before them but fearful images of death.

All the labours and pains of the mariners could not prevent the ships from dashing against each other. Abu Charoub called out to them, commanding that the barks should be kept off the coast, where many of them were suffering wreck upon the rocks, while others were swallowed by the waves; but all his efforts were vain.

The Christians were meanwhile contentedly watching the destruction of their enemies from the shore; and as the poor shipwrecked creatures were cast forth to land, they

took them and put all to the edge of the sword: he, therefore, who might have saved himself from the cruel waves of the ocean, fell into their atrocious hands, and was at once deprived of life.

All these horrors and cruelties were beheld by the Ameer Mugehid Edim; unable to remedy the evil, he wept in his rage and despair,—now threatening with stern gestures, and now calling aloud with a lamentable voice; but all equally in vain, seeing that not for this did the winds cease to blow or the tempest to rave; nor could the inhuman thirst of the Christians for blood be made to feel satiated by his outcries.

Seized with a just indignation, Abu Charoub exclaimed to him, “Yea, weep! for this misfortune hath been sent by God that thou mayst lament thine ill-advised resolve, by which so many men are sacrificed.”

The tempest at length subsided, and having gathered the remains of his shattered fleet, the Ameer returned to the Yebisat Islands, where he reposed himself from his toils, and sought to repair the heavy losses he had suffered in that great calamity.

The banners of the Walies united against Aly Ben Hamud were now approaching Cordova, led by the Sclavonian Hairan El Alameri: but their arrival was no sooner made known to King Aly, than he sallied forth to meet and attack them with his Africans and the people he had assembled from Malaga and Algezira-Alhadra. This the allied forces had not expected, believing the king would be intimidated by their approach, and permit himself to be shut up in the capital: they were therefore taken at disadvantage, and the cavalry of Aly fell upon them with such impetuosity as to throw them into a disorderly flight. A frightful slaughter was then made by the troops of Aly among the foot-soldiers of his assailants; and those generals, each accusing the other of the misfortune they had sustained, broke up their alliance, and separated in discontent. King Aly then charged his Wali Gilfeya, who was an experienced general, to pursue the fugitives, commanding him to make a cruel war on the Sclavonian Hairan El Alameri in particular; whereupon that captain passed through the districts which

were supposed to be more particularly favourable to the Alamerics, and besieged several strong towns which held for that party.

Hairan, for his part, had meanwhile retired to the territory of Jaen, and assembling the banners of the towns in that region, he formed a league with them, when they agreed to proclaim the Wali of Jaen, who was an illustrious cavalier of the house of Omeya, the lawful king of Spain. This was Abderahman Ben Muhamad Ben Abdelmclie Ben Abderahman Anasir, called Almortadi and Abul Motaraf, a virtuous man, who possessed vast riches, was of a liberal as well as upright mind, and had secured the love of all that land by the excellencies of his character. The name alone of that cavalier, who was the great-grandson of Abderahman the Great, lent a powerful impulse to the party of the Alamerics. The towns and people of those mountain regions proclaimed him their king and lord with acclamations of gladness: and Hairan the Slavonian, with all the Alcades and Alamerics then present, took the oath of fidelity and obedience to his rule: the only person who excused himself, under various suppositions and pretences, was El Sanhagi, Wali of Granada and Elvira.

CHAP. CXI.—OF ABDERAHMAN ALMORTADI.

THE Proclamation of Abderahman, the fifth of that name in the house of the Omeyas of Spain, with the oath of allegiance taken by his people, was celebrated in the city of Jaen with much solemnity and with many demonstrations of public gladness. Abderahman appointed the Slavonian Hairan to be Hagib of his house and state, when the latter convoked the Walies of the citics in his master's name, causing them to assemble troops, with which he marched against the forces of King Aly Ben Hamud.

The two hosts met near Baza, and an obstinate battle ensued, when the army led by Gilfeya conquered, and Hairan Alameri was compelled to retire. He then withdrew

from fortress to fortress, being under the necessity of sustaining a skirmishing fight at every movement.

In one of these combats the Slavonian general was severely wounded, and his cavaliers being dispersed, he was fain to conceal himself in a remote quarter of Baza, when his soldiers, believing him to be dead or a prisoner, returned to Jaen much discouraged and very sad at the loss of their leader. But after the lapse of a few days, the Slavonian found means to inform King Abderahman and his cavaliers of his safety; and this intelligence caused them to rejoice greatly, since they had already given him up for lost. The king sent a body of troops to serve as his guard, and these being joined by others from his own city of Almeria, they bore him to that place almost as it were in triumph. He was then immediately surrounded by a great concourse of Slavonians and Alamerics, the Alcaldes of Denia, Tadmir, and Jativa, also repairing to Almeria, each with his respective banners.

Through the whole extent of eastern Spain the Chotba had now been made for the King Abderahman Almortadi, and all the people of those districts prepared to restore the house of Omeya to the throne of Cordova, being resolved to drive thence the usurper Aly Ben Hamud. The fame of this resolve, and the proclamation of Abderahman, were soon carried through all the provinces of the realm, when the people declared for him in every part. Valencia, Tortosa, Tarragona, and Saragossa, all proclaimed themselves of his party, and the Walies of those provinces sent in their letters of allegiance.

This caused much anxiety to the King Aly Ben Hamud, and he despatched his most carefully selected cavalry to his general Saib of Sanhaga, whom he had appointed Wali of Granada and Elvira, commanding him to press on the war against King Abderahman and his partizans with the utmost constancy. There were, indeed, many who gave their wishes to that king, but they did not all proceed with equal zeal and courage: thus the number who gathered round his banners was not large, and the principal part of his strength was in the number of his cities.

Gilfeya and the Wali of Granada and Elvira were meanwhile infesting the territories and Comarcas of Jaen, in

fulfillment of the commands of their lord, while King Abderahman, with his followers, secured themselves in the mountain region of the Alpujarras, and in the strong position of Jaen itself, the city and fortress, that is to say. King Aly Ben Hamud marched in person, with a powerful army, against the Slavonian Hairan, whom he attacked and besieged in Almeria. After a stubborn resistance he took that city by storm. Hairan fell pierced by many lances as he fought in defence of the place, and so grievously wounded as to be almost dead, was borne to the presence of the conqueror, the Alcazar having surrendered on conditions, and because its defenders were acting in the conviction that their leader had already expired. Almost senseless from loss of blood, the Slavonian was placed before Ben Hamud, when the latter, forgetting the good service he had formerly received at the hands of the vanquished general, cut off the head of him who had but a few moments to breathe, with his own sword. Then, having taken measures for securing the city of Almeria, Aly returned to Cordova, content with his triumph, and believing that all the discords of the country would soon be at an end, since the restless and rebellious Hairan was at length dead.

In this year of 408, and on Tuesday, the 9th of the moon Xuban, there died at Cordova, which was his native place, the Cadi of Ecija, Suleiman Ben Chalaf, called Aben Gamron. He lived in the Chaudac of the Aragegila suburb, and prayed in the mosque of Almonthir: his remains were buried with great pomp in the Macbora, or cemetery of Om Salema, and the prayer was made for him by the Cadi Junor Ben Abdallah.

Even in the city of Cordova, and in his own Alcazar, King Aly Ben Hamud had many enemies, all of whom were more or less zealous partizans of the King Abderahman Almortadi. The same might be said of Seville, and through all Spain the nobles were for the most part on the side of Abderahman. Yet was Aly Ben Hamud not discouraged, but was constantly employed in preparing himself for the continuance of the struggle; and having despatched a large part of his forces to join the generals Gilfeya and El Sanhagi, in the district of Granada, he was now himself on

the point of setting forth to join them, in the hope of putting an end to the war. It was the intention of Aly to attack the city of Jaen, where King Abderahman made his residence, with all his forces, and everything was made ready for that purpose; the baggage train and guards of the king had even passed the gates of the city, and halted only to wait for his arrival; when, before leaving Cordova, King Aly entered his apartments to take a bath. There, the Sclavonians who attended him having been won to their cause, as is supposed, by the Alamerics then in Cordova, seized the unfortunate Aly, and wickedly drowned their lord while thus helpless in their hands.

Such was the unhappy end of the King Aly Ben Hamud. His death took place in the moon of Dylcada, of the year 408.

Aly Ben Hamud was in the 45th year of his age when he thus died; he was tall of stature, and of handsome person; his eyes were black, he was slight and spare of figure, and a man of severe and virtuous life, but very cruel to his enemies. He was King of Cordova one year and nine months. His death was publicly reported to be an accident or natural misfortune, and so did his guards and more trustworthy servants believe it to be. God alone knows all things.

CHAP. CXII.—OF ALCASIM BEN HAMUD, BROTHER OF ALY.

THE Generals of King Aly's guards, and all the followers of that prince, proclaimed his brother Alcasim Ben Hamud, Lord of Algezira Alhadra, as King of Spain; and this they did in Cordova with one accord, going through all the streets to make public his inauguration, and calling him El Manun. The event of his brother's death was made known to Alcasim with incredible rapidity, and he hastened to the capital followed by a force of four thousand horsemen, insomuch that his enemies had not time to impede his entrance or excite any movement against him; wherefore many of the nobles of Cordova saw themselves compelled

to swear allegiance to him and became his followers in their own despite.

One of the earliest cares of Alcasim was to command a rigid investigation to be made into the cause of his brother's death. The Slavonians who had served him in his bath were subjected to unheard-of tortures, and in the midst of these they confessed that they had murdered the king to satisfy the vengeance of certain among the Alamerics and others, whom the cruelties of Aly Ben Hamud had made his enemies.

And now, although these Slavonians did not name any particular person, yet Alcasim Ben Hamud caused many of the nobles to be put to death without any other proof of guilt than the presumption that they were his brother's enemies, arising from the fact that he had punished or put to death other nobles who were their kinsmen.

All men now feared Alcasim, and trembled in his presence, the principal families of the city being those most heavily oppressed. Many cavaliers fled the capital, and passed over to King Abderahman Almortadi, insomuch that the vengeance taken by Alcasim Ben Hamud enriched the party of his rival by the addition of many powerful nobles to his banners. The reports of certain victories gained by the people of Juén over the Wali of Granada also came at this time to increase the hopes of those who were attached to the family of Omeya, while they augmented the fears and distrust of the followers of the Hamudes in equal proportion.

When the news of Aly Ben Hamud's death reached Cebta, his son Yahye passed instantly into Spain with such forces as he could collect on the spur of the moment, leaving orders that numerous bands of cavalry should follow him to support what he called his rights; Yahye Ben Aly pretending that the succession to the throne of Spain belonged to him. Now that prince formed a large part of his army from cavalry of the Negros of Sûs, a ferocious people long inured to war; and this body of barbarian youth had departed from Africa, swearing to crown their leader in Cordova, or to die fighting in his cause. With these troops came many valiant Moorish and Alara-

bian generals, who promised Yahye Ben Aly the victory over his enemies with infinite confidence.

The known bravery of his nephew Yahye, the superior justice of his pretensions, and the large body of cavalry and men of Barbary, which he was persuaded that youth could command, gave Alcasim Ben Hamud much cause to fear. Assembling his troops, nevertheless, he departed from Cordova with the resolve to oppose that force, and proceeded towards Malaga. But when he approached the city, Aly was informed that his nephew had already obtained possession of the same. Nor were the negroes idle on their part: made aware of Alcasim's approach, they sallied forth to meet him, when several battles were fought with equal bravery on both sides, and nearly equal fortune. But at this time Alcasim received fatal intelligence from his people in the Alpujarras, who were daily suffering defeats at the hands of King Abderahman's generals; whereupon the uncle and nephew, seeing that while they were mutually destroying each other, they were rendering the enterprises of their enemies more easy and effectual, agreed to enter into a convention, with the hope of securing the sovereignty in their family, and for the more successful opposition of the rival to their house. It was thus decided, but not without a certain degree of falsehood and evil purpose on both sides, that Yahye Ben Aly should have a share in the government of the kingdom, and should even occupy the city of Cordova, while his uncle Alcasim, with the people of Seville, Algezira, and Malaga, reinforced by a part of Yahye Ben Aly's Cavalry, should carry on the war against King Abderahman Almortali; it was furthermore agreed that at the termination of the struggle the two kinsmen should rule the realm of Spain conjointly, with a just and equitable government, dividing the power amicably between them.

These conditions were concluded in the year 412; whereupon, having just sent a portion of his troops to El Sauhagi and the Wali of Granada, in the hope of enabling them to maintain themselves against Abderahman Almortadi, Alcasim Ben Hamud proceeded to Malaga, whither he had sent the corpse of his brother Aly, with the intention of causing it to be shipped thence to Cebta, where he pro-

posed to have it buried. All things being disposed for the fulfilment of that purpose, the body was embalmed, and being landed at Cebla, was there interred with great pomp, the sepulchre of Aly Ben Hamud being a beautiful mosque which he had himself erected on the Plaza or public square of the Lana.

CHAP. CXIII.—OF YAHYE BEN ALY.

WHILE Alcasim was thus employed with the funeral solemnities of his brother Aly, in Cebla, his nephew Yahye had entered Cordova with his guard, composed of the Moors of Sûs. The people of the city, abhorring his uncle Alcasim, received him with demonstrations of gladness, calling him their lord and king; they gave him the title of El Monteli; and Yahye, allowing himself to be borne along on the current of popular favour, caused the oath of obedience and fidelity to his person to be taken without delay.

The Moors of his guard were much rejoiced at finding their promises thus easily fulfilled; and the new King Yahye Ben Aly declared that his uncle Alcasim Ben Hamud had no right whatever to the throne of Spain, nor could put forth any just claim to a portion in the government, save only that which he, as sovereign, might be pleased to impart. The Xeques, Viziers, and Alchatibes, who were present at this declaration, affirmed the justice of the same, and offered the young monarch their arms and services to maintain him in his state and sovereignty without condition or exception.

While all these things were passing in Cordova, the followers of King Abderahman Almortadi were continuing the war against Manzor of Sanhaga, who did not venture to descend from the mountains, restricting himself to unexpected incursions, which he made from the clefts and asperities of his strongholds in the rocks, when he poured his troops hastily over the Comarcas of Jaen, so far as Guadix or Baza, and withdrew them as hastily, after he had ravaged the district, to the no small suffering of the people.

But the partizans of Abderahman would fain have had him quit that mountain warfare, and advance with all his forces upon Cordova or Toledo, where they believed that he would unite all the banners of Spain under his own command: there were, nevertheless, many among the Alameries who desired that the king should rather finish in the first instance with Gilfeya and Manzor of Sanhaga, who were cruelly devastating their country. Abderahman was on his part very anxious to march on Cordova or Toledo; but, not wishing to displease any of his followers, he first laboured to compel Manzor and Gilfeya to a pitched battle. He divided his forces into three parts, maintaining the Vegas or level plains of the Xenil with two of them, and despatching the third, which was composed of the troops of Jaen and Somontan, with directions to seek and bring to battle the general Gilfeya and the lord of Sanhaga.

Alcasim Ben Hamud had meanwhile returned to Malaga, and being made acquainted with the perfidy of his nephew, he wrote to his generals Gilfeya and Manzor, commanding them to abandon that war of Jaen, if it appeared likely to detain them much longer, and direct their forces on Cordova, there to assist him in compelling his nephew Yahye to the fulfilment of the conditions which he had offered to the brother of his father. Alcasim Ben Hamud then assembled his own cavalry, with the people of Malaga and Algezira Alhadra, accompanied by whom he proceeded towards Cordova.

When the approach of Alcasim was made known to his nephew, Yahye Ben Aly determined to leave the city, seeing that to the powerful army brought against him he could only oppose the force of his brave Moorish guard, and even of that body a certain portion had been sent to the Alpurjarras: he therefore considered it more prudent to avoid than to dare the combat, and departed from Cordova accordingly, taking unfrequented roads. Yahye then continued his march until he reached Algezira Alhadra, where he arrived at the close of the moon Dylcada, in the year 413. Having fortified himself in that city as he best might, he sent to Africa for a reinforcement of troops, and determined to wait the event.

Alcasim then made his entry into Cordova without having met with the slightest resistance ; but none of the principal inhabitants went forth to receive him, and he was met only by some few of the populace ;—a circumstance by which he was much displeased, and which clearly proved to him that the capital was not well-affected towards his authority. He at once commenced an enquiry, by which he learned the names of such principal men among the Slavonians as were most zealous in the cause of his nephew, and ordered that certain of these, as well as others belonging to the palace, should be put to the torture ; when, as the number he suspected was great, so the sufferings he inflicted were many as well as grievous. These cruelties caused Alcasim Ben Hamud to be more than ever abhorred ; and the more important of the nobles, perceiving that he had sent the greater part of his troops to the aid of Gilfeya, as a man who thought he had no cause to fear, began to enter into a conspiracy against him. With all the secrecy required, and taking care to let no trace of their real purpose appear, they contrived to gain over large numbers of the people, among whom they expended vast sums of money, distributing arms also to such of the citizens as they permitted to partake to a certain extent of their confidence, but concealing their ultimate end from all.

Towards midnight, therefore,—that being the point of time which they had selected,—they made a sudden attack on the Alcazar, where the guards defended the place so bravely, that the confederates, after fighting all night, were still unable to make themselves masters of the palace ; but they obtained possession of all the gates and forts of the city, which the revolted inhabitants at once occupied with the partizans of the conspiring nobles. They caused the Alcazar likewise to be closely surrounded by a large body of cross-bow men, so that none could enter or leave the palace but with their permission. That siege endured some fifty days, and the provisions of those within the Alcazar being exhausted, while they had no hope of succour from without, King Alcasim and his guards determined to sally forth against the armed multitude besieging the walls, within which they must otherwise perish by starvation. The hope of the King was, that by a sudden onslaught he might succeed in cutting a

path through the besiegers, and might eventually make his way out of the city.

This attempt he therefore made one morning at the dawn of day, and the sortie was effected with great impetuosity ; but so bravely did the people repel their assailants, that very few succeeded in forcing their way, and of those few the individuals who passed beyond the courts of the Alcazar were for the most part cut down in the streets or at the city gates. Among the rest, Alcasim himself would without doubt have been dispatched, had he not been made known to certain of the more generous cavaliers, who saved his life by taking him into the house of the Vizier Abul Huzami Gehwar, and that same night they contrived to get him out of Cordova. He was accompanied in his escape by some brave Alameri cavaliers, who gave him their protection to Xeres : here they left him in the house of the Wali of that city, a man in whom Alcasim had much confidence. This also took place in the year 413.

The army of Manzor, the lord of Sanhaga, and of the Wali Gilfeya, had meanwhile been strongly reinforced by the cavalry and foot-soldiers which Alcasim Ben Hamud had sent them on his arrival at Cordova, and they consequently descended to the Vegas of Granada, there to give battle to the troops of the King Abderahman Almortadi. On that spacious field the two armies met accordingly, and attacking each other with equal fury as if by common accord, they maintained the combat on either side with barbarous valour and unswerving constancy. The troops of Manzor presented a firm front to the impetuous charges made by the cavalry of Abderahman, and atrocious was the carnage that went raging over that fatal battle-ground. Neither side gave way ; yet victory did at length appear to be declaring for the Alameries, and the party of Abderahman was on the point of triumph, when a fatal arrow, winged by the hand of some predestined enemy to the house of Omeya, wounded the king himself so grievously, that he expired at the very moment when messengers were entering his pavilion to announce that his troops and allies were in victorious pursuit of the foe.

Thus died that illustrious king, and with him fell the highly-placed hopes of his followers. The unhappy news

were soon made known, and the death of Abderahman brought dejection to the spirit of the bravest among his generals. The enemy had meanwhile fled to the mountains; and the lord of Sanhaga, with his portion of the opposing army, had entrenched himself in Granada.

When the report of King Abderahman's downfall had reached Cordova, all hearts were seized with grief, seeing that the Iris whence they had augured the calm of serenity, and which had appeared with the flight of King Alcasim from their city, was now removed, and their hope of repose after so many civil discords seemed also to be taken away. The partizans of the house of Omeya were preparing triumphal arches for the entrance of Abderahman into his capital, in that fatal hour when the news of his death was brought them. All the city was thereby filled with dismay, the inhabitants trembling in fear and despair as they thought of the horrors that must ensue on the renewed entrance of the barbarians, and of all the calamities preparing for them by the frightful warfare again to recommence even in the very heart of their already exhausted city.

CHAP. CXIV.—OF ANOTHER DESCENDANT OF ABDERAHMAN THE GREAT, ABDERAHMAN ALMOSTADIR BILLAH.

THE Alamerics of Cordova, and all the partizans of the house of Omeya, now turned their eyes on Abderahman Ben Hixem Ben Abdelgiabar Ben Abderahman Anasir, a choice which they were assured would meet with popular approval in Cordova, as well as in all the cities of that portion of Spain which is called Andalusia. Abderahman Ben Hixem was brother to the renowned Mohamad El Mohdi Billah: he was twenty-two or twenty-three years old at the time when he was chosen king, and was proclaimed by all the Walies, Viziers, Alchatibes, and principal nobles of Andalusia, in the moon of Ramazan, in the year 114. The new sovereign was of fair stature and pleasing countenance; he had good ability, and in his early youth was considered to be of laudable habits and life. He was

called Abul Motaraf, and, when proclaiming him their king, the people gave him the title of Almostadir Billah.*

Abu Muhamad Ben Huzum El Faqui describes Abderahman Almostadir as an erudite and eloquent youth, who was besides a good poet : and Hayan tells us that there was not at that time a more noble person in his family than Abderahman himself. Letters were despatched to all the provinces and capitanaries or military districts, to the end that all should acknowledge his claims and swear obedience to his rule ; the Chotba was made for him in every mosque, and all applauded the judicious selection thus made of a great grandson of the illustrious Abderahman the Third, hoping from the noble youth so nearly related to that great sovereign the reparation of all the many evils which had now so long been suffered by the Moslemah of Spain.

But how vain are the hopes of man ! Offended by that selection, and the preference thus shown to Abderahman, his own cousin, Muhamad Ben Abderahman Ben Obeidala took an oath of vengeance against all the Alameries and nobles of Cordova ; determined in his secret soul to deprive his cousin of the throne, or to die in that attempt.

The proclamation of Abderahman Almostadir had taken place in the moon of Ramazan ; and the Easter of Alfitra or the close of Ramazan having come, the king saw cause to desire that the unlimited license permitted to themselves by his Andalusian and Slavonian guard should be repressed by the strong hand, seeing that during the disorders of the period of revolt just passed, they had formed the habit of going through the city, in the time of those festivals, committing every kind of excess, appearing to believe that every thing was to be endured at their hands, and that all the citizens were bound to yield obedience to their insolent commands.

The rules by which that body of soldiers was regulated now received a revisal : many of their privileges were taken away from them, many of their exemptions were recalled : and in these regulations the king did no more than give evidence of the rectitude by which he was governed. But

* Almostadir Billah—he whose hope is in the aid of God ; or the Confider in the protection of Allah.—*Condé*.

the turbulent soldiery thus restrained, were greatly displeased by those changes; the African Zenetes were more particularly offended, and many of them declared in their murmurs that the King Abderahman Almostadir ought rather to have been chosen the Prefect or Chief of a band of solitaires, an abbot of hermits in the desert, rather than as king to occupy the throne of Cordova.

Muhamad Ben Abderahman Ben Obeidala, the cousin of the king, did not fail to profit by these dispositions among the royal guard: availing himself of the opportunities afforded him by the possession of great riches, he soon obtained much popularity among them; and, by favour of certain light and inconsiderate youth of the nobles, he contrived to engage these troops in a conspiracy as hasty as it was traitorous and cruel. On the twenty-seventh of the moon Dylcada a band of the guard thus conspiring entered the king's apartments at the hour of dawn, and before King Abderahman had risen: they cut down the Slavonians who endeavoured to defend the door of the royal chamber, when Abderahman himself, disturbed by the clash of weapons and the cries of his Slavonian guard, who had remained faithful to him, awoke and sprang from his bed. He defended himself for some time with his sword: but what could one man do against a multitude? He was soon overthrown, and the assassins cut him to pieces with inhuman cruelty.

That done, they then marched through the streets of the city with their ensanguined weapons still bare in their hands, proclaiming Muhamad, their employer, King of Cordova; and, entering the houses of certain among the principal Xequcs and Viziers, whom they slew, they completed their work by plundering the dwellings of those murdered men of all the riches they contained.

And now, in all that populous city, there was so little firmness to oppose violence, that all the inhabitants, Xequcs and Generals, Cadies and Alchatibes, as well as the unarmed people, remained intimidated and amazed in presence of that turbulent horde; they listened to those uncalled-for and violent proclamations without strength or resolution to oppose themselves to the disorderly troop of assassins now revelling in their streets, as without courage to avenge the innocent blood of the good king Abderahman

Almostadsir, whose only desire had been to obtain repose for them, and who died in the endeavour to free them from the oppressions of an insolent soldiery. This monarch, worthy of a happier fate, had occupied the throne forty-seven days only when he came to the untimely end above described.

Abu Meruan Ben Hayan tells us that the letters which King Abderahman had sent to the Walies all over Spain, with respect to the oath of allegiance, had just been responded to by the replies desired, when, at the moment that he was receiving them, the Fates cut short his thread of life. He left no heirs, and his death was all the more deeply lamented in every province of Spain where the virtues of his youth had caused the wearied people to conceive hopes of repose, to be enjoyed beneath the protection of that monarch and his posterity for a long series of years.

Shortly before this period, the King Yahye Ben Aly had returned from Africa, whither he had repaired for the arrangement of his affairs, and had for some little time contented himself with Algezira Alhadra and Medina Malaga, both which cities he held in his hands. But, hearing of his uncle Alcasim's flight from Cordova, and the state of matters in that city, he sent a body of his cavalry to Xeres, where he knew Alcasim to have taken refuge, demanding that his kinsman should be given up to him. The Wali of Xeres surrendered his person accordingly, when King Yahye kept him in a rigorous imprisonment, wherein he remained even to the period of his death, although that event did not take place until many years after Yahye had himself departed from life. Abulfeda informs us that Alcasim lived twenty years after the death of his brother Aly, and adds that there could be no cause for the disagreement between himself and his nephew excepting only this,—that he, being old, and the uncle of Yahye, could not resolve to pay homage and obedience to his nephew, and the son of his brother.

CH. CXV.—OF MUHAMAD MOSTACFI BILLAH.

ENTHRONED with the violence above described, Muhamad Ben Abderahman Ben Obeidala was called by his guards and

partizans El Mostacfi Billah. His treasures, scattered with a prodigal hand, obtained for him the hearts of the troops and the populace; all classes were compelled to swear obedience to his rule, and the Chotba was made for him in all the mosques. His Zenetes and guards were bound to his interests by new privileges and immunities, which he granted to them with unsparing liberality, adding to these a more amply furnished table, arms of increased value, and vestments of more splendid brilliancy than they had ever before possessed. To the nobles who were his partizans Muhamad gave governments and other offices, even to their heart's content, and, having constructed that kind of safeguard around him, he believed himself secure. Nor did he then give himself further care for anything but the restoration of the gardens, and other places of pleasure surrounding his Alcazar of Medina Azahra, thinking only of passing his hours in all the delights and enjoyments of this life. Little did Muhamad concern himself with the government of the provinces, nor did he give any attention to the defence of the frontiers. The Walies and Alcaldes of the towns were left to rule as absolute masters therein, disposing freely of the rents and revenues of every kind* paid into the public treasury by the various classes of contributors.

From these causes the treasure of the state became gradually diminished, although the king received no portion of the same for his own expenses. The Exchequer or Treasury of the Divan Alâta, which had been set apart for rewards and gratifications to be conferred only on those who had performed good service to the state, was in like manner exhausted by the profligate liberalities of Muhamad; his own riches, although of vast amount, but only just sufficing to the expenditure required for the due splendour and fitting propriety of the royal house.

It thus became needful that the Almojarifes, or receivers of the public revenues, should obtain resources by means previously unattempted, and they oppressed the towns of

* In addition to the Azaque, or tenth of all the fruits of the earth, with that of the increase of flocks and herds and of the proceeds of industry, there were the Charaga, or dues of import and export; the Taadil, or tax paid by the retail dealers; the rent of the markets; and the capitation tax, exacted from Jews and Christians.—*Condé*.

Andalusia by new and unheard-of exactions. But, although these heavy taxes drew large amounts, yet all was not sufficient to meet the immoderate demands made on the treasury of Andalusia, called on as it was to make up the deficiency occasioned by the disorders which had been suffered to intrude into the administration of the contributions due from the provinces.

The king meanwhile thought of nothing but his amusements. He passed his time in listening to the pleasing verses repeated by the poets of his court, or to the canzonets written by the Vizier, Zeidun of Cordova, wherein that author celebrated the loveliness of the beautiful Habiba, daughter of the king Muhamad, whose affection for that child of his love amounted almost to folly. Abdelmelic Ben Ziadata, called El Tabeni, also presented his ingenious verses to the sovereign, with his book on the manners and customs of the Arabs, which was likewise in verse. The house of this Abdelmelic Ziadata in Cordova was a kind of academy; it was frequented by all who loved letters, and he was himself renowned for his accomplishments throughout Africa, Egypt, Syria, and Arabia. To King Muhamad it was that the Vizier and Alchatib, Abdelwahib Abul Moqueira, wrote the dedication of his collection of poetry; and Abdel Wahidi of Cordova, who was a native of Cabra, and held the office of Walilcoda of Jativa, also dedicated his elegant discourses in prose and verse to that monarch, as did the eminent poet Aben Chalid Ben El Tarus the collection of poems which he made in his praise, and Abul Chuleni, of Beja near Seville, his most celebrated Canzonets.

King Mohamad did not fail at length to perceive that in the demands made on the people, the Receivers were proceeding in a manner little in accordance with order and justice; yet he knew not how to remedy those evils, nor by what means he could prevent the vexations not unfrequently described to him. His inability and negligence combined caused the just complaints of his people to remain as if disregarded; and from these disorders it ensued that a prince, whose natural disposition was liberal and generous, obtained the reputation of being exacting and avaricious, some uttering murmurs against him because they paid too much, and others because they received too little.

And, for the greater calamity of that unhappy time, when all public virtue seemed to be extinct, it was not possible to persuade the Walies of the provinces that their duty was to maintain concord among themselves for the benefit of the state, nor did they listen to the few wise men who implored them to offer an example of union and obedience to the less important functionaries acting beneath their orders: thus the generals commanding on the frontiers, with the Alcaides of fortresses and those of the towns, were alike disobedient and wanting in their duty. Many of these men had risen from poor and obscure beginnings, but, in the various revolutions and disorders of the state, had succeeded in raising themselves to power, and having intruded themselves into important offices, had become an object of fear to those beneath them. Even the people, corrupted in all parts of the kingdom by the perpetual disquietudes, conspiracies, and rebellions of the time, had become accustomed to a life of violence and tumult; many classes among them preferring that disorderly state of things to a life of repose, seeing that by the former they were furnished with occasions for effecting robberies, and taking vengeance; those who had offended them, with that impunity which unhappily must ever attend crime in periods of civil warfare and popular revolution.

The king was most probably unconscious of the political infirmity thus prevailing among his people, or, if he knew of its existence, he had neither the firmness required to repress the manifestations thereof, nor the power to apply such remedies as might have tended in the course of time to eradicate the evil. Neither did he know that those very men, whose disloyal and traitorous forgetfulness of the most sacred obligations had unjustly placed him on the throne, were now impatient of his seat thereon, and anxious to dispossess him of the same. Yet this was a fact that could not be long concealed; and Muhammad, becoming intimidated by the rumours which at length reached him, fled his capital, and passed the greater part of his time at Azahra, where he was nevertheless far from being in security. He then began to distrust his guard and the most familiar of his attendants: nor without good reason, no long time having elapsed before the seditious lovers of change having incited the multitude to rebellion, that uncertain populace gathered

in fierce troops about the houses of the Viziers and Cadies, which they surrounded with insolent outcries, demanding the deposition of certain among the great officers, with the heads of others, and finishing by requiring that the King and his Ilagibs should be put to death.

Muhamad having been warned of the danger threatening him by the few generals of his guard who still remained faithful to him, and these attending him with a body of African cavalry, he left the Alcazar of Zahra in the night—taking with him all his family. It is true that he was abandoned on the road by many who had made profession of intending to share his fortunes; but he succeeded in reaching the fortress of Ucles in the territory of Toledo, where he was received with much kindness by the Alcáide of that place, Abderahman Ben Muhamad Ben Selim Ben Said Ben Almondar, the son and grandson of brave generals, who had held the government of the same from the time of King Abderahman the Great.

But even here his enemies found means to reach the unhappy Muhamad Ben Abderahman; and he had not been long at Ucles before he received his death. The manner of that event was on this wise: a dish composed of chickens, prepared with a certain herb which grows in that country, was placed before him, and he unsuspectingly ate thereof: but the herbs thus used were poisonous, and of their effects Muhamad died, in the year 415. The duration of his reign was seventeen months, and he left no son to succeed him.

In this same year, and on Thursday, the 13th of the moon of Giumada Primera, Abdallah Ben Robie of Cordova died in that city, and in the morning dawn of the Juna or Friday he was buried in the house of Xuhaid, being followed to the grave by a large company: he was not taken to the Macbora or cemetery, from fear of the barbarians who were at that time infesting the vicinity of the capital. May God be gracious to him!

CHAP. CXVI.—OF YAHYE BEN ALY.

WITH the news of all that had befallen in Cordova, the partizans of King Yahye Ben Aly Ben Hamud took care to hasten to Malaga, when they described to him the revolutions and disquietudes suffered by the state, and incited him to march on the capital with his troops, for the purpose of obtaining possession thereof, thus placing himself on the throne, which they declared to be his of right, in virtue of the declaration made by King Hixem in favour of his father.

Yahye Ben Aly was then governing his dominions of Malaga, Algezira Alhadra, Cebla, and Tangiers, with infinite moderation and justice: he was beloved by his people, and, desirous of his aggrandizement, they offered to seat him on the throne of Cordova. Thus it was rather by the will of his ambitious partizans, than by his own, that Yahye Ben Aly departed from his city of Malaga and repaired to Cordova.

The principal inhabitants, and such honourable men as might still be found, rejoiced in his coming, because they hoped to be delivered by his means from the tumultuous anarchy which had so long torn the city to pieces: many of them therefore went forth to receive him, and to express the confidence which they felt in his prudence and good government. Nor did the citizens generally refuse the customary manifestation of their adhesion; the entrance of the new sovereign put all in movement, and he was greeted on his passago with numerous demonstrations of gladness. He alighted in the first instance at the Aljama, and after having made the prayer of Adohar, he passed through the principal streets amidst the festive acclamations of the populacc.

The new king then wrote to the Walies and Governors of provinces, requiring them to repair to Cordova, there to take the oath of allegiance; but the more distant rulers excused themselves under various pretexts, while many of those who were nearer openly declared that they did not acknowledge him to be their king, but an intruder called into the country by a faction which they despised.

Among those who thus avowed their disobedience, the

king was most of all displeased with the Wali of Seville, and desiring to make such an example of him as might serve for the warning of the rest, he commanded his Alcaldes of Xercz and Malaga to unite their cavalry and foot-soldiers with those of Sidonia and Arcos; which done, they were ordered to direct their march on Seville: King Yahye Ben Aly, with the cavalry and other troops of Cordova, also preparing to join them.

And here it will be proper to say who was that Wali of Seville, and what were his parentage and condition, with the qualities of the man. Muhamad Ben Ismail Ben Ahmed El Lahmi, called Abulcasim, had been Cadi of Seville during the short reign of Alcasim Ben Hamud, when his prudence and sagacity enabled him to obtain all he desired from that king, who made him governor of the province: but, in return for that benefit, when Alcasim departed from Cordova in the year 413, Mohamad Ben Ismail seized the sovereignty of the district as the independent possession of himself and his posterity.

Abu Rafe relates that this Muhamad was the son of Ismael Ben Muhamad Ben Ismail Ben Coraix Ben Abed Ben Amer Ben Aslam Ben Amer Ben Itaf Ben Naim, and he adds that Itaf and Naim came into Spain at the time when Baleg Ben Baxir El Coraixi made his descent on the country. Itaf was of Hemesa, in Syria, and of the tribe of Lahmi: he had his origin from Alaris, a village situate on the confines of Algifer, which is between Egypt and Syria. Having arrived in Spain, Itaf established himself at Caria Jumin, in the district of Taxena and jurisdiction of Seville, a place situate on the shore of the Great River. Others say that this race was of the sons of Nooman Ben Almondhir Ben Measemai, and add that they prided themselves much on their nobility, the illustrious antiquity of which has been often sung in melodious numbers, as may be seen in the eulogies and verses of many ingenious poets and men of letters, in those written by Aben Lebana among others.

Abu Meruan Ben Hayan tells us that the father of Muhamad, Wali of Seville, was Ismael Aben Abed, a man greatly distinguished for prudence, and possessing much influence both before and after the commencement of the

civil war. He exercised considerable authority in the city and Comarca of Seville, and being very wealthy, lived in a state of pomp and ostentation but slightly differing from that affected by kings. No private cavalier of Andalusia could equal him in that respect, nor had any so vast a number of servants as those which formed the household of Ismail Aben Abed. He was very liberal moreover, and received to the shelter of his roof not a few of the most illustrious exiles and banished nobles of Cordova, at times of public calamities, which were then but too frequent, and when civil discords were kindled in the capital. This Ismail is furthermore described as a crafty person, but one of considerable erudition: he was also a good cavalier, of very firm mind and much apparent wisdom, but in effect one who always contrived to attain his ends with certainty and security. He brought up his son Muhamad in the same cautious policy, and taught him to overcome the greatest difficulties.

When Muhamad Ben Ismail was informed that the King Yahye Ben Aly was marching against him, he placed a body of the cavalry of Seville and Carmona in ambush at a convenient point, with orders to sally forth when the occasion should present itself. Muhamad himself, with other forces of foot and horse, advanced to meet King Yahye, when the light companies of Cordova had several skirmishes with those of Seville, and after a certain time the hosts of both the contending parties came into presence. The troops of Muhamad soon began to yield ground, yet doing so by little and little only, according to a stratagem determined on by their leader, and as men who were making their best efforts to avoid that necessity, until at length they feigned a retreat which ended in a seeming defeat and disorderly flight. But when they had brought the men of Cordova so far in pursuit as to be within the ambush mentioned above, the forces of Muhamad turned with great impetuosity on their supposed victors, and this ambush also bursting forth from its hiding-place, the troops of King Yahye were surrounded. That prince himself, fighting in the hottest of the battle, was pierced through and through by a lance which nailed him to the saddle, and receiving other wounds at the same time, he fell dead from his horse.

Such was the unhappy fate of that good king, whose virtues promised a happy reign. The battle in which he lost his life was fought on the 7th day of the moon Muharram, in the year 417. His head was cut off by command of Muhamad Ismail, who sent it to Seville, with the news of his victory, while the cavaliers of Cordova and the people of Malaga retired mournful and vanquished from the field.

CHAP. CXVII.—OF THE REIGN OF HIXEM EL MOTAD BILLAH.

WHEN the intelligence of that unfortunate battle, and of the death of Yahye Ben Aly, reached Cordova, all the honourable men of the city were much grieved thereby, seeing that the well-founded hopes which they had conceived from the known prudence and justice of that hapless prince were thus destroyed. The Divan immediately assembled, and by the influence of Abillezami Ben Gehwar, Vizier of the city, and that of the Alameri cavaliers, the Walies were induced to proclaim for their king and lord Hixem Ben Muhamad Ben Abdelmelic Ben Abderahman Anasir, a great grandson of that illustrious sovereign, namely, and brother to the excellent King Abderahman Almortadi. This Hixem was then living in retirement at a fortress called Ham Albonte, the Alcaide of which was Abdallah Ben Casim El Fehri.

The choice thus made was applauded by the people, and the new king was proclaimed with demonstrations of the most sincere gladness, under the title of El Motad Billah. This happened at the end of the moon of Rebie Primera, in the year 417. Hixem Ben Muhamad was born in the year 364; the mother who bore him was named Oneiza, and he had a brother called El Mortadi, who was four years his junior. He sent his messengers to announce that voluntary election made by the council and the people of Cordova; and being a wise and moderate man, he gave no evidence of rejoicing in his sudden elevation to the throne, but on the contrary was manifestly reluctant to exchange the

security and peace of his retirement for the cares of a perilous command.

His reply to the envoys who announced his election was to that effect: he admitted that the love of the people of Cordova to his family, and their good will to his person, were very gratifying, but added, that he was not prepared to take on his shoulders the heavy charge of the government; nor was it until after some days of dissident reluctance that Hixem Ben Muhamad yielded to the entreaties of those who had elected him, and accepted the crown. Nay, even after he had done so, the new monarch, remaining doubtful of the inconstant people to whom he was unknown, made a long delay before he could be prevailed on to repair to Cordova, and continued on the frontier, having taken the command of the troops then occupied in the defence of the same. This was the only pretext by which Hixem could justify his absence from the capital. He fought against the Infidels with various fortune, seeking to drive them back within their ancient limits, which they had overpassed on the frontier of eastern Spain, as well as on that of Galicia and Castile; those misbelievers being tempted to that intrusion by the opportunities which the civil discords of the Moslemah had so long afforded them.

On this occasion the king had done much honour to a very wise and learned man, the Alcaide Hixem Ben Muhamad Ben Hilel El Caisi, of Toledo, who had been the disciple of sages distinguished as Aben Abdus and El Chuzeni. This Alcaide was as remarkable for his bravery as for the excellence of his life and the austere piety of his conduct. He fasted with the utmost rigour, and celebrated the Idalfitra or Erster of the close of Ramazan, with his Rabitos or frontier-knights* in the most splendid manner,

* These Rabitos, or Moslemah knights of the frontier, professed extraordinary austerity of life, and devoted themselves voluntarily to the continual exercise of arms. They bound themselves by a vow to defend the frontier from the Christians; and all these cavaliers were of high distinction. Of the most surprising constancy in the fatigues of war, they were not permitted by their rules to fly before the enemy, but were held by their vows to fight and die without moving from the point they defended. It appears highly probable that from these Rabitos pro-

expending all his savings of the year in feasting the troops of his fortress on that day.

The vestments of the Alcaide Hixem were very simple, and his food was of the most frugal kind: he had passed his whole life on the frontier, but died soon after the departure of the king, who had himself remained there three years all but two months, at the end of which time the Vizier Abul Huzam Gehwar wrote entreating him to delay no longer, but at once to appear in his capital, where the people, greatly desiring to behold their king, and unquiet at his protracted absence, were becoming discontented.

Abul Huzam added, that from the light discourses and complaints of the populace, the seditious were already taking occasion to foment discords, which might easily become the pretext for serious commotions; that the Governors or Walies of the provinces in the interior of the kingdom were openly manifesting their intention of rendering themselves independent, winning over to their interests the hearts of the people, whom they ruled by the seeming blandness and equity of their government, and were meanwhile acting on all occasions in the manner of absolute sovereigns, not permitting that the contributions or revenues of their provinces should be sent to the capital.

On receiving these advices, King Hixem Ben Muhamad departed from the frontier, and repaired with much diligence to Cordova, making his entrance into that city on the 8th day of the moon Dylhagia, in the year 420. He was received with all possible demonstrations of gladness, and, surrounded with an innumerable concourse of people, proceeded to his Alcazar. Nor did any long time elapse before the cordial kindness of his manner, his gentle and generous treatment of all who approached him, and the attention he paid to the upright administration of justice, had wholly gained the hearts of the citizens; while the repose that succeeded his arrival repressed the wicked hopes of those who were expecting new revolts, and laid the needful restraint upon their enterprises, calming at the same time the

ceeded the Military Orders of Spain, as well as those of the East—all so renowned for their bravery and for the services they rendered to Christianity. The rules of both institutions have much similarity.
—*Condé.*

disquietudes of the more honourable Moslemah, who were in dread of that misfortune.

King Hixem Ben Muhamad took care to visit the hospitals and houses of refuge for the poor, in his own person, as he did the Madrisas or schools for children, the higher seminaries for youth, and the colleges for advanced students; the most especial attention of the king was, however, bestowed on the sick, and his own physicians were charged to pay a daily visit to the Almarestanes or infirmaries. Among the changes made by Hixem Ben Muhamad was the deposition from his office of Abderahman Ben Ahmed Ben Said Ben Muhamad Ben Baxir Ben Garcia,* called Abulmotarif, who had been elected Cadi of the Aljama of Cordova by the King Aly Ben Hamud. He was a very eloquent person, and had been greatly favoured by the family of Hamud: the office of Cadi and Prefect of Prayer had been held by him for twelve years ten months and four days, according to Abu Meruan Ben Hayun, and, according to the same authority, he retired into private life on being deprived thereof, from which time he dwelt secluded in his house at Cordova until his death, which took place a little more than two years after his deposition from office, when he was buried with great honour in the Machora or cemetery of Aben Abas. The day of Abderahman Ben Ahmed's funeral was a Saturday, and was about the middle of the moon Xaban.

About this time the following verses were recited by Obeidyas, the Chatib or secretary of Obeidala Ben Meruan: their subject was the palace inhabited by Obeidala, and the magnificence of which was such as to compete with that of the Royal Alcazar, and to much surpass in its splendour the palace of Mogueiz and the houses of Almanzor:—

“Bright Alcazar of Abi Meruan,
Worthy to be the Hall of Paradise;
What shall surpass thy beauty, rich and varied
As are the hues of changeful leopard skins.

* In the Arabian documents of this period it is not unusual to find Gothic and Christian names, as Gonde mir Ben Davad, Ahmed Ben Guzman, Mohamad Ben Fortune, Abdallah Ben Golier, Ben Borangel, Ben Mendis, Ben Munios, Ben Maurice, Ben Radnir, Ben Garcia, Ben Sancho, Ben Fortis, Ben Gulindo, &c.—*Condé*.

Fair home of bliss, thy radiant chambers shine
With jaspers rare and marbles quaintly carved;
They glitter with the gold that Tibar sends
As 'twere to teach us what may be the home
Of him whom Fortune favours.

King Hixem El Motad Billah endeavoured to bring the Walies of the provinces to their duty by reasoning and gentle means: he wrote amicable letters, wherein he sought to prove the pressing necessity of union, concord, and peace, between all the Moslemah provinces of Spain, to the end that the kingdom might be the better prepared to make head against the Infidels, and might recover the territory which the long reign of civil discord had caused it to lose on the frontiers, since it was certain that, without a good understanding among themselves, they could not hope for security from without, any more than for the maintenance of public happiness within the realm. Nor did the Walies deny the force of these reasonings; they admitted the truth of all the king advanced, and acknowledged the legitimate authority of the Caliph of Cordova; but, in point of fact, they gave little heed to what he had said,—they did not cease from their intrusive pretensions, and under various pretexts still continued to refuse the payment of the contributions and services which they ought to have remitted, such being due by their respective provinces to the state.

The king then became convinced that so grave an evil must be remedied by more severe measures, and resolved to attempt the gradual reduction of the disobedient Walies: he therefore charged Obeidala Ben Abdelaziz El Yahsebi with the subjection of the Algarve or west of Spain; and that general did in fact compel to their allegiance the Walies of Sibla, Oksonoba, Xilbe, and other cities, which were still governed by men who had been appointed for the most part by the King Yahye Ben Aly. The government of Gezira Saltis King Hixem El Motad Billah bestowed on the father of Obeidala Ben Abdelaziz El Yahsebi, even Abdelaziz El Beerui; but that Wali did not long continue to merit the confidence of his sovereign, since he also did his utmost to change the government thus entrusted to him into an independent lordship.

Now it had come to pass after the death of Abderahman

Almortadi, that the lord of Sanhaga, Almanzor Ben Zeiri, had made himself master of all the towns of Elvira and Granada, the weakened condition of Andalusia having permitted him to obtain possession of them in the first instance, and the constant presence of civil disorders in Cordova enabling him to make good his seat and secure himself firmly therein, before measures could be taken for his expulsion. Finding that he remained undisturbed in his acquisitions, Almanzor Ben Zeiri then departed for Africa, leaving in his place a very prudent and valorous general, his nephew Habus Ben Balkim. Alchatib tells us that this Almanzor reigned seven years in Granada.

At Malaga the son of Yahye Ben Aly Ben Hamud, even Edris, governed as a king, and his people called him Amumenin, or Prince of the Faithful, having sworn fidelity and obedience to him with all solemnity at the death of his father, Yahye El Motadi, for so did they call Yahye Ben Aly. Edris himself they named El Olui, or the Exalted, and he was likewise called Abu Rafei. This Edris was a man of much charity and benevolence; he gave five hundred doubloons of gold to the poor on each succeeding Juma or Friday of the year; and the rectitude of his character, with his generosity and other excellent qualities, were celebrated in numerous verses. He recalled from their banishment such nobles as had been wrongfully proscribed in the time of his father, restoring to them whatever they had previously possessed; and during his life there was never once heard a complaint of oppression. He was, moreover, a very learned man, and visited the schools with much interest, neither did he neglect the hospitals: the ear of the excellent Edris was ever open even to the humblest of his subjects, and his life was occupied with no other employment than that of conferring benefits and distributing favours. The Vizier of Edris and the governor of his state was his kinsman Muza Ben Afan; but this man finally proved a traitor, and assassinated his lord, at the instigation of the King of Sanhaga, Almoez Ben Badis.

In Denia, the government was conducted by Abdallah El Moaiti: he also was called king, and coined money with his own impress. But no long time elapsed before Mugehid Edim, his master, having returned from Majorca, not only

deprived him of the sovereignty, but banished him from the country. Abdallah El Moaiti then departed to the land of Cutema, and was never seen to raise his head again in this world, having died in those parts somewhere about the close of the year 432.

The Walies of Seville, Carmona, and Sidonia, were in like manner maintaining themselves in a complete independence of King Hixem, and as, during the two years of that monarch's reign, the fortune of arms was more frequently favourable to the rebel Walies than to himself, the virtuous king, finding his efforts vain, and desiring to put an end to the civil war so fatal to the interests of the country, consented to enter into a negociation with those rulers, and made terms of agreement with the greater part of them.

But by that moderation all the dwellers in Cordova were filled with discontent; they attributed to King Hixem El Motad Billah himself the slight success of his arms, and all the calamities of the period were soon considered to be the fault of their sovereign. The evil had indeed become such that it was now beyond remedy. The state was so much weakened by long disunion, that it no longer had power to contend with a rebellious Wali, since the discord had extended to nearly all the provinces, and there was none that could be implicitly depended on. The good and wholesome habits and customs of the Moslemah, as existing in past times, were known no more—all had become vitiated and corrupted: nor had this deterioration taken place by degrees,—it had come on with the impetuous haste of a torrent: whether zealous or lukewarm as Moslemah, and however firm in the faith, all seemed alike given over to the empire of their passions: the more active spirits were restless and ungovernable; the less energetic were indolent and apathetic; but all seemed to be agreed in one thing—indifference, namely, to the general welfare: at a word, the absence of public spirit was equally perceptible through all ranks, and the Spanish Moslemah well merited what was then said of them by King Hixem El Motad Billah,—"This generation can neither govern well, nor be well governed."

The Vizier of Hixem Ben Mohamad, even Huzam Ben Gehwar, advised his lord to avoid the capital and retire to

Medina Azarah, where he might the better secure his person from the perils of any sudden commotion, and from the insults of a popular insurrection, which the Vizier considered to be imminent; but the king felt so confident of the love and respect which his people of Cordova had always evinced for him, that he could not fear so ungrateful and unjust a return for his benefits. Yet the seditious leaders of the populace did not long delay to give him proof that his Vizier had judged them rightly; they excited the inconstant and inconsiderate multitude to rebellion, and demanded the deposition of King Hixem. For this purpose they availed themselves of the obscurity of night: and it would seem that men covered by the nocturnal shadows are bolder and more insolent than in the day, seeing that beneath the darkness they are not impeded by the blush which is naturally brought by the light of day to the cheek of him who commits a bad and dishonourable action. Thus, then, the assembled multitudes passed through all the streets of the city in the gloom of night, declaring with loud outcries that they would have the king depart from Cordova.

The Vizier Abul Gehwar was among the first to announce to King Hixem Ben Muhamad that the will of the unquiet and impetuous people had been expressed as hath been related; and the well-judging monarch, far from being dismayed at that intelligence, gave thanks to God that He had so been pleased to have it. With the break of day he departed from his Alcazar with his family and a good company of the cavalry of his guard, escorted by whom he retired to a country palace, whence he repaired on the following day to the fortress of Hisn Abi Xarif, which he had built. Many noble cavaliers of Cordova accompanied their king: among others the renowned Abdelbar El Nameri, a great poet, with Muhamad El Raini, who was also much distinguished for the elegance of his verses, and the learned Ahmed Ben Abdelmelic Ben Xobeid, author of the book called *Hanut Alatar*, which was filled with various compositions, both in prose and verse, and all of infinite beauty. Other friends and favoured servants of Hixem Ben Muhamad likewise proceeded with him to his retirement. His departure from Cordova took place in the year 422; and

he remained in much tranquillity within the retreat he had chosen, until he passed to the mercy of God, which event took place in the year 428.

The constancy of mind and many other virtues displayed by the admirable King Hixem Ben Muhamad, proved him the worthy descendant of his illustrious ancestors, and rendered him deserving of a better fate, or rather of living in times less adverse to the good and upright. In him the dynasty of the Omeyas of Spain found its close. That dynasty had commenced with Abderahman Ben Moavia in the year 138, and finished with the excellent Hixem Ben Muhamad in 422, after which none of that house reigned in the land.

The historian Alathir relates, that after the deposition of King Hixem El Motad Billah, a youth of the family of the Omeyas, who was in the flower of his age, pretended to the succession of the throne. The council and the leaders of the people replied that they did not desire to elect him their king, because they perceived that fortune had turned her back on all the Omeyas, and feared that the ruin of the state could not but ensue if the warning were disregarded. They bade him, therefore, rather look to the safety of his life and person, than seek his own destruction on the throne, taking pity on his youth, and having consideration for the nobility of his condition. But to all this the young man replied in these words,—“Let me be this day proclaimed king, and to-morrow take my life, if my adverse star shall so dispose it.” Yet he could not persuade them, nor bring about the exaltation he desired; wherefore it is said that this Omeya disappeared that very day, and never more was anything heard either of him or his affairs. Thus passed the state and fortune of that house, as a thing that had never been.

Happy is he who hath done and laboured well, and praised for ever be the name of Him whose empire shall never end !

PART III.

CHAP. I.—OF THE ELECTION OF GEHWAR, OF HIS GOVERNMENT, AND OF THE STATE OF THE PROVINCES.

THE succession of the Omeyan princes on the throne of Cordova having been thus brought to an end, partly by the machinations of the Xeques and Walies, who sought to establish their own greatness on the ruin of that illustrious family, but also partly by the distrust and superstitious conviction of the people, who were persuaded that the fortunes of that race must have taken an unfavourable turn, the members of the Council and Aljama of Cordova assembled together, and began to deliberate on the steps next to be taken.

They declared it to be an indisputable fact, known to all men, that in the whole realm of Spain there now remained no one of the family of the Omeyas, small or great, rich or poor, and they next cast their eyes on the virtues and excellent qualities of Gehwar, a wise and prudent Vizier, the descendant of Hagibs, Walies, and Chancellors, who had been ever in the councils of the by-gone kings.

This illustrious person was much esteemed and beloved by the people: he had secured the respect of all parties; and in the dangerous period of revolt and civil discord through which the city of Cordova had so painfully passed, Gehwar had constantly distinguished himself by an extraordinary impartiality, a love of justice but too rarely found at that time, and a never-failing regard for the common welfare.

For these virtues, which were known to all, Gehwar received the unanimous voices of the council, and being proclaimed king, was enthroned in Cordova amidst the acclamations of the whole people. It is true that there were not wanting statesmen who dreaded the concealed ambition which they suspected to lurk behind the wise and moderate

conduct of their new ruler, but Gehwar found means to conciliate even the most distrustful, and caused all who approached his person to conceive the most flattering hopes of a prosperous and glorious reign.

With a cautious policy which proved the excellence of his understanding, Gehwar had no sooner received the oath of allegiance from the Xeques, Alcades, and principal inhabitants of the city, than he hastened to establish a new form of government eminently aristocratic in its principle, and concentrating the chief powers of the state in a Council: this Gehwar composed of the most important, influential, and honourable citizens of Cordova. In these men he vested the whole authority and force of the sovereignty, reserving to himself nothing more than the presidency of that Divan. All that was now done, therefore, each decree and every command, went forth to the people in the name of this Council; and if any one addressed a petition or request to the king in particular, he replied as follows:—"In this matter I can neither grant nor refuse; it belongs to the Council to decide, and I am but one of the Divan."

In this manner did Gehwar extend the mantle of peace over the people of Cordova, and from the first he won over to himself the minds of all; the most distinguished men of the city were devoted to his government heart and mind, nor was there a dweller in Cordova that failed to sound his praise. Among other proofs given by Gehwar of his moderation was this, that he refused for some time to abandon his private residence for the royal palaces, and when at length it became needful that he should do so, the regulations introduced by his command into the arrangements of the household were such that the service and economy of the royal abode were found to differ but slightly from those of a private dwelling. The new sovereign reduced, among other things, the great number of the servants, and freed the gates of the Royal Alcazars from that enormous crowd of occupants by which they were beset in the time of the Omeyas. He dismissed a large part of the Life Guards also, and established so judicious an economy in every department of expenditure made for the palace, that a very important diminution in the cost of the household was the immediate result.

One of the many praiseworthy regulations of Gehwar, and that for which he was at the time most gratefully celebrated, was the removal of all that horde of informers and pretended lawyers, who had long been suffered to live by calumnies, by the fomenting of quarrels, and by the prolongation of law-suits. In the place of these men the king established a closely-limited number of legal officers, all of whom he caused to be paid in proportion to their appointments, and after the manner of the judges. The king also prohibited the continuance in their usurped functions of those pretended physicians and ignorant charlatans who professed to cure disease without the knowledge and experience that could alone qualify them to do so. He furthermore decreed the institution of a college, by whose members, all of whom were men of learning and practical experience, every man should be examined who might thenceforth present himself for the exercise of medicine or the service of the hospitals.

The due provision of cities with all needful articles of food was another object of the king's attention, and one of the results of his care in that respect was to render Cordova the granary of all Spain, seeing that within a certain period of time it rose to that eminence; the markets and store-houses of the capital becoming the resort of dealers from every province of the kingdom.

It was by King Gehwar, moreover, that the Almoxarifs or collectors of dues, and the Alcaldes or inspectors of products, were established; he also appointed superintendents to all the gates and public squares, their office being to see that justice was maintained, and that the due liberty of coming and going was accorded to all whose business called them to those places of assemblage. All the chiefs of these offices were bound to render an account of their administration at stated periods to the council of state.

Among the most carefully-selected and most trusted of the new king's Alwacires or ministers were those to whom he confided the police of the city and its guardianship by day as well as by night. These officers distributed arms among the most respected inhabitants of each quarter, to the end that those men might watch the boundary of their own quarter and the district with which they were familiar. The streets of shops and ranges of booths were closed by

command at a given hour, and all the streets of the city were defended by gates for the prevention of those nocturnal disorders by which the more peaceable of their inhabitants had been afflicted in other times, and with the purpose of rendering it more difficult for such criminals as were flying from one night-watch to escape into the rounds of another, thereby eluding the pursuit of justice. The guardians thus entrusted with the maintenance of order were expected to exhibit an increasing vigilance during the period of their watch, and were bound to furnish an exact account of whatever they had observed to those who followed them, with the relation of all that had taken place within their hours of guard.

By these cares the city lived in tranquillity and within the shadow of just laws; its inhabitants prospered, the merchants and artisans became rich, and all showered benedictions on the head of Gehwar, who, seated on the throne as on a watch-tower, looked down from that elevation with eyes that were ever mindful of all things appertaining to the good government of the state, or which were required for the well-being of his people.

To the Walies of the provinces King Gehwar wrote letters informing them of his election to the crown, and calling on them to appear for the purpose of proffering him their oaths of allegiance; but the greater part of them excused themselves with various pretexts, feigning urgent causes whereby they were at that time prevented from repairing to Cordova, yet concluding with false protestations of submission, and offering the insincere expression of their wishes for his prosperity and continued welfare. Those who permitted themselves the most openly to manifest their indifference to the king's election, were the Walies of Toledo, Saragossa, Malaga, Seville, Granada, and Badajoz: but Gehwar endeavoured to conceal his perception of their true motives, and the conviction which he felt of their resolve to introduce division and anarchy into the Realm which he was so earnestly labouring to tranquillize. He wrote to them again, therefore, expressing his approbation of the zeal with which they were giving themselves to the interests of their respective governments, and the care they manifested for the welfare of the provinces entrusted to their rule, reminding them at

the same time that the security of the kingdom, and its continuance in the prosperity then commencing, depended wholly on the union and concord which he hoped to see maintained through all its provinces.

But while the prudent Gehwar was thus employed for the common weal, let us see what was in fact the state of those provinces, and relate the manner in which the Walies of the same had gradually raised themselves to the sovereignty of their respective governments.

The Wali of Seville at that time, and who had then become the absolute master of the whole district, was Muhamad Ben Ismail Ben Abed, called Abul Casem. His family was originally of Hemesa, and his descent is described as follows:—When Baxir Ben Baleg, the Coraixi, had made his descent on Andalusia, there came with him two Syrian leaders called Itaf Ben Naim and Naamin Ben Almondar Ben Mê Alcemai, both of a hamlet called Alaris, which was on the extreme border of Algifer, between Syria and Egypt. They were of the tribe of Lahmi, and from these men did the family of Abed claim descent, boasting much of the antiquity of their origin, and declaring that their forefathers had established themselves in Seville at the time when the division of the lands was made in the days of Gesam Ben Derar. They add, that Itafa Ben Naim then selected his abode in Caria Jumin, which was in the territory of Taxena, and within the jurisdiction of Seville.

Ismail Aben Abed, the father of that Mohamad who bore rule in the reign of Gehwar Ben Mohamad Ben Gehwar, had secured to himself a large share of authority and consideration in Andalusia, by his prudence and by the influence of his great riches: both these he maintained during the civil wars, and even after they had ceased to afflict the land. He lived with a parade and ostentation but little different from that affected by kings, insomuch that there was no private person in all Spain who surpassed or even equalled him in that respect. The possessor of extensive domains in many Comarcas, and of immense herds of cattle in every kind, Ismail Aben was also the lord of innumerable servants, and expended riches uncountable in a spirit that was highly generous and liberal. His house was the asylum of all the most illustrious among the cavaliers who were per-

petually flying from Cordova during the civil discords; and the frank liberality which he displayed, with the apparent candour of his disposition, gained him the hearts of all these personages; while the wisdom of his councils and the sagacity of his discourse secured him the respect of his visitors, and promoted those views of aggrandizement which the wily Ismail secretly entertained.

These views were nevertheless not realized to their full extent during the lifetime of Ismael, but after his death the path he had marked out was followed carefully by his son Muhamad, who contrived to obtain from the King, Alcasem Ben Hamud, the appointment of Cadi of Seville, that ruler manifesting an unbounded confidence in the loyalty as well as prudence of Muhamad; but in return for his benefits the crafty son of Ismail, following carefully in the footsteps of his father, took advantage of the disorders reigning in Cordova, insomuch that when Alcasem was driven from the capital, and fled as a fugitive to the Comarcas of Seville, the ungrateful Cadi made himself master of the city by means of those arts which he had learned from his father Aben Ismail Ben Abed.

This happened in the year of the Hegira 413;* and Muhamad Aben Ismael was assisted in his attempt by the most illustrious Xeques and Viziers of the province, even those who had been long the most distinguished for their loyalty, and who were the most influential from the importance of their offices; he having won over the greater part by his liberality, or caused them to fall into his snares by other methods, so that all were among his most fervent partizans. The sons of Abu Bear Zubaidi, the Grammarian, who had been preceptor to King Hixem the Second, were in the number of Muhamad's more zealous followers, as were those of Airica and other men of distinction, whom he attached to him by the employments which he conferred on them, or bound to his party by the friendship which he showed them. The most important offices in southern Spain had indeed been gradually entrusted to the creatures of Muhamad Aben Ismael, who thus formed his sovereignty and successfully prepared the first steps to the declaration of independence

* A.D. 1022 or 1023.

on which he had long determined. This he finally completed during the rebellion which was commenced by the battle wherein he turned his troops against King Yahye, over whom he obtained a decisive victory near Ronda, in the year 416. From that time Muhamad had lost no opportunity of aggrandisement, and had obtained possession of fortresses more or less powerful in almost every part of Andalusia.

Now there were certain astrologers and makers of horoscopes who had predicted to Muhamad Ben Ismail that his dynasty should endure until destroyed by the hands of men who should come from Sabdria, an island which, as they added, was nevertheless not the proper abode of those thus fated to work the downfall of his race. Muhamad instantly decided that the persons intimated in the dark sayings of the astrologers were no other than those of the Berezilla family, whose connection with the Hagib Almanzor Ben Abi Amer had procured for them several extensive governments, with other charges and employments of high value, in Andalusia. Among these officers, Muhamad Ben Ismail fixed his attention more particularly on Muhamad Ben Abdallah Albarzeli, lord of Carmona and Beija, who had raised himself to the independent rule of those cities during the revolution and civil wars resulting from the discords of the Hamudes, even Alcasim and Yahye Ben Hamnd. Him, therefore, Muhamad Ben Ismail resolved to attack, and never to desist from making war upon him until he should have despoiled him of all that he possessed, and effected his destruction. He was thus on the point of laying siege to Carmona, when the letters of King Gehwar were brought to him from Cordova; but he did not abandon his intention on account of them,—nay, rather he made the more earnest efforts to press the siege and disembarrass himself of the enemy he feared, to the end that he might be the better prepared for the new contest which he could not but anticipate.

Now when the unhappy intelligence of the death of their King Yahye had reached the city of Malaga, the inhabitants thereof had despatched messengers into Africa conveying the news of that event to Abu Giafar Ahmed Ben Abi Muza, known as Aben Bokina, and to the Slavonian Naja, who both held governments in that country. These leaders

thereupon repaired without delay to Spain, whither they brought a brother of the deceased Yahye, even Edris Ben Aly Ben Hamud, whom they hastened to proclaim king in Malaga, giving him the title of Alolui and saluting him as Ameer Amumenin.

When thus called to the throne of Malaga, Edris Ben Aly, the brother of Yahye, was at Cebta, the government of which city he had for some time held with that of Tangia. His Xcques now advised him to appoint Hacen, the son of Yahye, as his substitute or Wali in Cebta, none proposing that either of the sons of Yahye should be made king, because they were but children of tender age: the number of those heirs thus left by the lamented King Yahye was but two,—Edris, who was the elder, and Hacen, who remained in Cebta as aforesaid, and who was the younger. He retained that office until the year 430. Being but children, these sons of Yahye were easily persuaded to do as others thought best.

The accession of Edris, the brother of Yahye, to the throne of Malaga took place in the year 418. He was a good and beneficent man, by whom all who had been exiled were permitted to return to their homes, and the property and lands of such as had forfeited their possessions he restored to their original owners. Edris was very charitable moreover; and on every Juma* he distributed 500 doubloons of gold in alms to the poor: a man of much learning, he paid frequent visits to the schools, and did not disdain to give his personal attention to the poor and humble: at a word, the benevolence of the king was ever ready for all who sought his aid. The Viziers of his dominions were two,—the Selavonian Naja, who ruled in Africa, and Aben Bokina, with his kinsman Muza Ben Afan, who held the government of Malaga: the latter was his Hagib as well as Vizier; the former was the general of his armies.

That unfortunate event, the death of Yahye Ben Aly, caused the rise of another party in Algezira Alhadra; and this faction professed to act for the sons of Alcasem Ben Hamud, who were then living in the care of a truly honourable Xeque of Almagarava, known as Abul Ilegiag. When

* Friday.

made acquainted with the death of Yahye Ben Aly, Abul Hagiag called together the people of Almagarava, at that time in Algesiras, and addressing the blacks, who were the troops of the country, he said to them, "Here do I present to you these youths, Muhamad and Hacen, sons of Alcasem Ben Hamud. They are your veritable Sovereigns and the descendants of your lords; they will be your leaders, and will render you happy provided only that your loyalty and courage be such as to equal their deserts." The Negros drew their swords, and swore to obey the commands and maintain the rights of their master's sons, even at the cost of their lives. Then Muhamad Ben Alcasim, although but a boy, gave them his thanks with much grace and self-possession; promising to hold it as a glory through all his days, that he was the companion and general of his Negros.

In Granada, likewise, there arose a cause of trouble, seeing that the then ruler, Habus Ben Mascan, nephew of the General Habus Ben Mascan Ben Zeiri of Sanhaga, far from obeying the commands of King Gehwar, presumed to deny his right to the throne. Pursuing the instructions of his uncle, even Habus Ben Mascan, who had left him in his place when he had departed for Almagreb in the year 420, the governor of Granada sought to enter into alliances with those of Malaga and Carmona, in concert with whom he proposed to act offensively and defensively alike against Seville and Cordova.

All the southern part of Spain, with the islands of Ivica, Majorca, and Minorca, were in the power of the Alameries, who had held the government of those districts from the time of the Hagib Almanzor Muhamad Ben Abi Amer, and of his sons Abdelmelic and Abderahman. During the whole of the civil wars these Alameries had ever remained true to the family of the Omeyas: and when Hayran Alameri was conquered by the King of Cordova, Ben Hanud, who deprived him of his life and state together, a kinsman of Hayran, even Zohair Alameri, who was then Wali of Denia, taking advantage of the civil war, and with the aid of other Alameri generals, had made himself master of Medina Almeria by force of arms.

Now the city was at that time held by the Cadi M·i-

hamad Ben Alcasem Zubeidi of Cairwan, who had obtained the government by favour of the Wali of Seville, Muhamad Ben Ismail Aben Abed, whom he had essentially served, and whose views he had forwarded effectually at the time when Alcasem Ben Hamud was called King of Cordova. But the Cadi Muhamad Zubeidi, who was a brave and prudent man, was deprived of life at the sanguinary assault and storm by which Zohair the Alameri made his way into Almeria, when Muhamad Ben Alcasim died fighting in defence of the city.

The government of Denia was then given by Zohair the Alameri to Aly Ben Mugihaid, who had received the city of Castillon as an inheritance from his father, Mugihaid Ben Abdallah Mugihaid, called Abu Gaix, who was lord of the islands of Majorca, and in his own states called himself Amcer. He had a daughter married to Muhamad Ben Ismail Ben Abed, Cadi and subsequently King of Seville.

On the islands, Ahmed Ben Raxic Abu Alabas held rule. He came of the Beni Zobeid of Murcia, was a just man, of great learning, was highly esteemed by all the Alamerics, and the islands remained peaceably under his command until the day of his death. That event took place in the year 440.

The land of Tadmir was subjected in like manner with Almeria to the obedience of Zohair El Alameri, and was governed by the noble Xequé Abu Becar Ahmed Ben Ishac Ben Zuaid Ben Tahir, of the tribe of Alcaysi, one of the most illustrious Cabilas in Africa. He ruled the land as Alcadem or Prefect, was a just and moderate man, who desired no other title than that of Mudlehim or the Reconciler; and his zeal, with the fidelity which he displayed in the service of the Alamerics when so many were unfaithful to the most sacred obligations, was a beautiful and admirable thing. He was rich and beneficent, which enabled him to do much for the advantage of the State; and the land of Murcia blessed the government of their excellent Xequé. To crown his happiness, Abu Becar possessed a son called Abderahman, who, while still in his youth, was the careful imitator of his father's many virtues.

Valencia, and all her dependencies, which was a large

tract of the best land in Spain, was under the obedience of Abdelazic Abul Hasan Ben Abderahman Ben Abi Amer, Wali of Valencia, who, for his great power and the high nobility of his state, was entitled Ameer and Almanzor, being the grandson of the great Hagib, Muhamad Almanzor Ben Abdallah Abi Amer. He was a man of such refined policy that he contrived to gain the hearts of all the Alameri generals, more particularly that of Zohair: he was indeed regarded as their chief by all the followers of his father's house, and he ultimately inherited all their possessions. Abdelazic had been Wali and Lord of Valencia from the year 412. The cities of Murbiter and Xatiba were governed for him by Lebun and Mubarie, both Alameri generals; and these being well united with those before mentioned, they all held firmly together, but were greatly disaffected towards the party of Cordova and its new King, Ben Muhamad Gehwar.

In Saragossa, the Ameer and absolute master was Almondar Ben Hud, son of Yahye Ben Husein, of the Ategi-bies and Ginzamies, illustrious tribes of Arabia. He had made himself Lord of Saragossa, and of almost all Eastern Spain, at the beginning of the civil war, in consequence of a treaty into which he had entered with Hairan the Alameri. He was also Wali of the frontier, where his extraordinary valour and prowess had justly obtained for him the illustrious title of Almanzor. His conduct had secured him the entire confidence of the Kings of Cordova, while his liberality and the prudence of his rule had assured him of the affection of his people. On the election of Gehwar, Almondar Ben Hud Aben Yahye Ben Husein replied promptly to the letters sent him by the king, expressing his good wishes, but he added no word respecting obedience or acknowledgment, and spoke only of defending his frontiers.

In Huesca and its territory the Wali Man Ben Ategi-bi governed without restraint. He had married Borixa, a daughter of the Hagib Abderahman, son of the renowned Almanzor Muhamad Ben Abi Amer: at a word, all parts of the East and South of Spain were in the power of the Alameries and Algibies, families united by alliances, marriages, or other connections, which served to form a

powerful bond between those chiefs or kings of districts, who, thus strengthened by the force with which they held together, were far from desiring to pay obedience to the new king of Cordova.

In Lusitania and the Algarve* of Spain, the Beni Alaftas had possessed great power, even from the time when Abdallah Ben Muslamah Alagibi Aben Alaftas of Mekinas had succeeded to the Persian Sabur; which last had been chamberlain to King Alhakem, and in the time of Hixem the Second had been appointed Wali of Alyarac. It was by the Persian general, even Sabur, that the young Abdallah Muhamad Ben Alaftas had been conducted to the frontier; nay, so greatly did Sabur esteem his judgment, that he concluded no important matter without first consulting him, and was entirely guided by his will, bestowing on him many favours, and conferring important characters on his favourite, the government of Merida among others. When Sabur died, which he did in the time of the civil wars, Abdallah Ben Muslamah, who had in some sort become the Wali of that Amelia or district, succeeded the Persian in his command, and then declared himself absolute master of the State of Algarve. He even entitled himself Almanzor, and was so vain of his lordship, that, feeling perfectly assured of its possession, he treated the letters which King Gehwar had written to him, demanding his obedience, with contempt. Nay, Abdallah then declared his son Muhamad, a youth of much promise, to be his future successor.

This self-elected monarch held his court in Badajos; the Alegibies of Tortosa and Huesca were of his kindred, as were also the Aben Hudes of Saragossa; and for this cause Abdallah Ben Muslamah Aben Alaftas was one of the most powerful rulers in Spain.

In Toledo, the Hagib Ismail Ben Dylun, who called himself Nasroldaula Almudafar, had obtained possession of the city, as well as the mastery of the surrounding Comarcas: he was an illustrious general of great valour, but a man of a proud and ambitious character, aspiring to the sovereignty of all Spain, and pretending that for his high

* Algarve—the West.

nobility, and the long succession of his forefathers, all of whom had held the most important governments of the country, he ought himself to take precedence of all other sovereigns, the Ameers of Cordova and of Seville not excepted.

When Gehwar, therefore, had despatched to the Hagib Ismail Ben Dylun the letters which demanded his homage and obedience, Ismail had replied with contemptuous haughtiness, telling the king that he must content himself with commanding in that inconsiderable corner which he pretended to hold in Cordova; he added, moreover, that Gehwar need not expect to retain even so much longer than the weak citizens of the place should be content to permit his doing so; but that as for him, Ismail, he acknowledged neither in Spain nor beyond it any other sovereign than the Ruler in Heaven.*

With this powerful prince was connected the lord of Azahila and of Santamaria de Aben Razin, who was called Huceil Ben Chalf Ben Mib Ben Racin, and had inherited the domains of Sahila in the territory of Cordova, with those of Santamaria in the east, which was called, by way of distinction, Santamaria de Aben Razin de Aben Aslai. His family had been masters of those cities since the year 401, the first lord of the same being the Hagib Iz El Daula Abu Muhamad Huceil Ben Racin.

Ismail Ben Dylun was furthermore protected by Almondar Ben Yahye, and encouraged by the favour of those powerful rulers, whose states bordered on his own, he did not fear to treat the letters of Gehwar Ben Muhamad Ben Gehwar with the contempt we have described; nay, even the menaces of the latter served no other purpose than that of awakening discord and causing the commencement of a new civil war.

The cities of Huelba, Libla, and Gezira Saltis, were in the power of the Yahyes Yahsebis, who had been Walies of Libla from the time when their father Ahmed had made

* "This Ismail Ben Dylun," remarks M. de Marles, "bore the name of Almamoun among others, and it is under that name that he is frequently mentioned in the Spanish chronicles. The French writers call him Almenon."

himself master of the district, which he had done in the year 410. Of this family, one called Ayoub had been Wali and Alealde of Cordova in the time of the Hagib Muhamad Almanzor; and the whole house had ever maintained its fidelity to the kings of Cordova, doing their best, moreover, to promote peace and concord among the kings of Andalusia.

Santamaria di Algarve, which is the port of Oksonoba on the Western Ocean, was in the power of the Vizier Ahmed Ben Said Abu Giaffar, who had been Alchatib or secretary to Suleiman Almostain Billah, King of Spain. The Vizier Ahmed held the government on the behalf and as the inherited right of his son-in-law Said Ben Haroun Abu Otman of Merida, who subsequently succeeded to his inheritance.

Meanwhile, the lord of Seville, Muhamad Ben Ismail Aben Abed, pressed each day more closely on Carmona and its Wali Muhamad Ben Abdallah Albarceli: he held the city closely besieged, and reduced it at length to such straits, that Muhamad Ben Abdallah, seeing himself compelled to surrender by the total failure of provisions, determined to save himself from falling into the hands of his enemy, and fled with a few of his followers at the very moment when Carmona was in the act of giving itself up to the troops of Seville. He then retired to Ecija, which was still his own; but not considering himself secure even there, he soon afterwards departed to implore the aid of Edris, King of Malaga. Muhamad also despatched his son on a similar errand to the lord of Zanhaga, who was master of Elvira and Granada, entreating help and favour from him likewise, when that generous ruler came to his aid in person with a select body of cavalry. King Edris of Malaga likewise sent his Vizier Aben Bokina to the succour of Muhamad with an army of considerable strength, both princes fearing much evil to themselves from the ambitious designs of Aben Abed, lord of Seville.

But Aben Abed was, meanwhile, no inactive observer of the preparations thus making against him: he sent his son Ismail with a carefully-chosen body of troops to the encounter of those marching against him in aid of the lord of

Carmona; and Ismail having met those auxiliaries before they had united their forces, defeated both with great good fortune.

When Aben Abed received intelligence of his son's victory, he sent him another company of his most valiant cavaliers, to the end that these, uniting with the troops of Ismail, might enable him to pursue the lord of Zanhaga and the General Aben Bokina; thus continuing his successful operations against those leaders.

The people of Muhamad Ben Ismail Aben Abed proceeded on their mission with so much celerity, that they quickly outmarched the lord of Zanhaga, when he, fearing to be overpowered by superior numbers, and dreading also the advantage which his enemies would derive from having obtained the first success, sent in all haste to the general of Malaga, Aben Bokina, who was but at the distance of an hour's march, exhorting him to advance without fail to his aid, declaring that he would maintain the battle until his arrival, and affirming that if joined by his force he should infallibly secure the predominance.

The troops of Zanhaga and those of Seville encountered each other accordingly with much valour; but when the latter thought only of falling on the banners of Zanhaga, they found themselves unexpectedly assailed by the forces of Aben Bokina, and they, who had believed themselves already conquerors, surprised by the advent of those new enemies, were seized with a panic, and turning rein, they fled the field of battle in great disorder.

The allied forces then made a terrible carnage in their flying ranks; and in that retreat Ismail, the son of Muhamad Aben Abed, lord of Seville, died fighting as a good warrior should do. Those of Malaga then cut off his head, which they sent to the King Edris, who was at that time lying grievously sick in the mountains of Yebaster, but who nevertheless rejoiced greatly in the success thus accorded to his arms.

The news of the misfortune he had sustained in the death of his son and the loss of his troops caused infinite sorrow to the lord of Seville; he feared lest Gehwar of Cordova, taking advantage of that defeat, might turn the occasion to his injury, and that all those acting against him

then working together, they might succeed in effecting his ruin. To attract the populace, therefore, and give a pretext less odious than the mere gratification of his own ambition to the wars and pretensions with which he was afflicting the country, Muhamad Ben Ismail Aben Abed invented the following fiction:—

He pretended to have discovered and set forth among the people that King Ilixem Ben Alhakem El Muyad Billah, of whom nothing had been known for a long time previously, had just made his appearance in Calatrava, and affirmed that this unhappy prince had come to him, imploring his assistance; wherefore he declared that the lawful sovereign of them all was now availing himself of his arms for the purpose of reinstating himself on the throne of Spain. The crafty Muhamad Ben Ismail added that he was then entertaining King Ilixem as his guest in his Alcazar, and, resolving to serve him as his natural lord, had promised to restore him to his kingdom. He wrote numerous letters containing this false relation to the Xequcs and Governors of the provinces, and to the Walies of all the most important cities, whether in Spain or Africa: nor were there wanting some few who were sufficiently credulous to give their belief to that fable; these accordingly assured him of their obedience, and declared themselves in his favour; nay, in some parts the Chotba was made for the King Ilixem Ben Alhakem, and Muhamad caused money which bore the name and impress of that sovereign to be coined in the mints of Seville.

It is true that the more intelligent and thoughtful of the Walies despised this invention of Muhamad Ben Ismail's, and paid no regard to the babblings which he had excited among the people; yet the delusion was maintained during some years, until the moon of Muharram, in the year 427, that is to say; and it contributed not a little to the re-establishment of Muhamad Ben Ismail's affairs, and promoted the success of his projects, while it acted as an impediment to those efforts for the maintenance of peace and concord which King Gehwar did not cease to make. Nay, it would appear to be a fatality attached to human affairs, that Fortune seems ever ready to abandon the man of upright intentions, while she follows the triumphal car

of the bold and ambitious evil-doer. Those times were in truth the enemies of virtue and justice: the Walies of all Spain, possessed by a spirit of inordinate covetousness, or by a vain ambition for sovereignty, thought of no other interest than those personal to themselves, and despising all consideration of the common welfare, they paid no regard to the remonstrances and admonitions of their well-intentioned sovereign, the just and beneficent Gehwar.

CHAP. II.—CIVIL WARS AMONG THE MOSLEMAH.

THE army of the allied princes of Malaga, Granada, and Carmona, was now encamped at Alcala, in the territory of Seville, and Muhamad Ben Abdallah the Barzeli had regained once more his city of Carmona, whence he sallied forth with his people to ravage the neighbouring Comarcas: his people laid waste the lands around Seville; nay, these powerful tribes extended their incursions even to the immediate neighbourhood of the city itself, and burning and destroying as they went, did not pause until they had entered Atrayana.

Muhamad Ben Ismail, the lord of Seville, was meanwhile busily gathering the remnants of his host, and by the energy of his character, the extent of his riches, and the renown for valour which was justly due to the general of his cavalry, Ayoub Ben Amer Ben Yahye Yahsebi of Libla, he succeeded in assembling a considerable force. Ayoub Ben Amer Yahsebi defeated the allies in many skirmishes of more or less importance, and eventually drove them beyond the borders of Seville. Malcontent with these reverses, the allied princes then began to accuse each other of the misfortunes they were sustaining, and finally dissolving their union, each man returned to his home.

Now the General Ayoub Ben Amer Yahsebi having rendered this important service to Muhamad Ben Ismail of Seville, believed that he had thereby secured to himself the possession of Huelba and Gezira Saltis, which he held for that ruler, but which he desired to obtain in absolute

sovereignty, and meant to govern independently, in despite of Muhamad Ben Ismail, as did his brother Ahmed Yahsebi in Libla, where he ruled as absolute master, notwithstanding all the opposition made thereto by Aben Alafias of Badajoz on the one side, and by Muhamad Aben Abed of Seville on the other, both of whom had secretly resolved to render themselves lords of those states.

At this time the King of Malaga, even Edris, who had been long sick, departed to the mercy of Allah, when his General Aben Bokina did all that in him lay to secure the throne for Yahye Ben Edris, known as El Hayan: the Xequés and principal nobles of the city and its Comarcas also concurred in that desire; and the oath of allegiance being proffered to Prince Yahye, he was proclaimed amidst the acclamations of all. But when the news of the death of Edris Ben Aly reached Cebla, the Slavonian Vizier Naja, who governed there, deputed another Slavonian general, in whom he confided, to act in his place, and crossing the Strait, he passed over to Malaga with Hacén Ben Yahye Ben Aly, whom he proposed to crown king of that city. It will be remembered that the Slavonian general had been the guardian from his childhood of that prince, and he retained so complete an empire over him, that he was thus assured of holding both the African and Spanish sovereignties in his own hands.

When Aben Bokina was informed of their debarkation on the shores of Spain, he went forth from the city to meet them with a select force of his bravest cavaliers: the Slavonian General Naja and the Prince Hacén Ben Yahye were then compelled to retire to the Alcazaba, within which they were admitted by means of the intelligence which they had maintained with the Alcaide of the place. There Aben Bokina instantly besieged them with much vigour and a restless activity of assault; but the people of Prince Hacén were also full of resolution; they defended themselves with infinite steadiness and bravery; their sallies and the assaults which they delivered in their turn causing very heavy losses to the besiegers.

But the siege continuing with varying success on both sides, the provisions of the besieged began to fail, when the Slavonian Naja proposed a compromise, which was accepted,

and consisted in the following conditions :—Prince Hacen Ben Yahye was to return in safety to his government in Cebta and Tangier, while Yahye Ben Edris was to be left in the peaceable enjoyment of Malaga, but with the condition that he should accept a rich and eminent merchant, called Axetayfa or Xetayfa, for his Vizier, that person being a man in whom Naja placed much confidence. Thus the Slavonian and his followers came forth in safety from that siege in which they had endured many privations and could entertain no hope of succours. All the conditions being arranged, Naja then returned with Hacen Ben Yahye to their governments of Cebta and Tangier.

Now Hacen Ben Yahye Ben Aly had married a cousin of his own, called Asafia; she was the daughter of his uncle Edris, the brother of Aly, and from consideration for her, Prince Hacen had refrained from exalting himself to the independent sovereignty of Cebta, as he might have done. But two years after the events above related, the Slavonian Naja assassinated Prince Hacen his master; not moved by love to the beautiful Asafia, as some writers affirm, but incited, as is maintained with more probability by others, by his desire for the unrestricted possession of the government, on which he at once entered as absolute master. When the intelligence that Hacen had been thus murdered reached Malaga, the King Yahye Ben Edris forwarded messages to all his kindred abjuring them to unite with him for the punishment of that crime. Nor did the assassin Naja remain inactive; gathering whatever forces he could muster, he passed over into Andalusia, in the hope of finding means for sowing discord among those who should assemble against him, and thus neutralizing their alliance. It is affirmed, that before his departure from Cebta he put to death an infant son whom his master Prince Hacen had left behind; but others declare that the child died of sickness. God alone knows the truth.

As Wali over Cebta and Tangier the traitor Naja left Merubad Bihi Ben Aleslabi; and as the Slavonian had long and maturely meditated the wicked enterprise on which he was bound, he bestowed double pay on the great body of cavalry which he had raised for the purpose, and now took

with him, hoping thereby to secure the fidelity of those troops with the concurrence of their officers in his ambitious designs.

Having passed the Strait with a powerful fleet, he at once succeeded in obtaining possession of the two fortresses of Malaga, with its Alcazar, which he entered by surprise, and with the aid of the intelligence which he had found means to establish and maintain with the Vizier Xetayfa. The Slavonian general then shut up King Edris as a prisoner in his own chamber, thinking of nothing less than assassinating him as he had done Prince Hacen, and thus rendering himself master of all the territories held by the allied Alhacenes in Spain, as he had obtained those they owned in Africa. The merchant Xetayfa, with his riches and authority, gave Naja most valuable aid in these his intentions, supplying his people with abundance of provisions and enabling him to continue the double pay he had offered not only to the people of Barbary who had accompanied him, but also to such other vagabonds and broken men as now came flocking to join his force.

The news of these violent proceedings did not fail to reach Algezira, when Muhamad Ben Alcasem at once assembled his troops for the rescue of his kinsman Edris, and to proceed against the traitorous Slavonian Naja. The latter then set forth a rumour to the effect that Muhamad was coming, not for the deliverance of Edris, but to make himself master of the city; and sallying forth with his people, he prepared to give battle to the advancing troops. He had not gone far, when certain Xequés who were in his company, but were in secret disaffected to his interests and did not serve him in good faith, but were in fact desirous of his ruin, advised him to return to the city and there await the arrival of his enemies, whom he might then easily overcome, or, failing this, might send to Cepta and Tangier for an increase of force; while if he then risked a battle, he must throw all on the chances of the result. To this Naja replied that he would return as they advised, but with a few of his followers only, and for the arrangement of an affair which was of the highest importance, leaving the greater part of his force to encounter the enemy, or at least to keep him in check.

But the true purpose of that false traitor was to take the life of Edris and of all such as he believed likely to remain faithful to their king, and with this intention he was in fact hurrying to return to Malaga, when he was himself encountered on the way by certain of the Andalusian Xequés and some generals of Edris, who had not deserted their lord in heart, although they had left the city with the host of Naja. These men followed close on the traces of the intended murderer, until they had come to a hollow way better known to the Xequés of Malaga than to the African stranger, and which the former had reached by a shorter road than that pursued by the latter; then taking advantage of the difficulties presented by the pass, they surrounded the small body in attendance on the traitor Naja, when they cut the Slavonian, with ten of his cavaliers, to pieces. That done, two of their number rode hastily to Malaga, when they entered the city, crying, "Albricias, Albricias!"*—Victory, victory! They thus aroused the people, who took their King Yahye Ben Edris from his prison, and bringing him forth to the streets, proclaimed him anew amidst universal rejoicings.

The treacherous Xetayfa was hewn to morsels by the knives of the enraged multitude; nay, all his kindred and partizans were in danger of the same fate, but King Yahye Ben Edris succeeded in pacifying the people and avoiding that effusion of blood, while at the same time he saved the lives of all the other Slavonians then in Malaga, and who were equally threatened by the populacc.

Made acquainted with the death of their leader Naja, the host of that Slavonian general hastened to disperse;—many passed over into Africa, and escaped; others attached themselves to the service of Muhammad Ben Alcasim of Algezira, offering to become his vassals, and fight against whomever he might assail; wherefore Muhammad Ben Alcasim himself receiving intelligence of all that had occurred from his kinsman Yahye Ben Edris, recalled the

* "Albricias, Albricias!" These words imply "Reward me, for I bring good news!" They are nearly equivalent to the old French "*Largesse*," and are still used in Spain—(but now jestingly)—by such as bring pleasant intelligence.—*Trans.*

troops he had sent to aid the latter named prince, and remained quietly in Algezira.

These events destroyed all those hopes of peace and unity which had been conceived by King Gehwar of Cordova, who, to his great sorrow, beheld the flames of discord and civil war extending themselves more and more widely in every direction. The paternal kindness of his counsels and admonitions to those contentious spirits thus destroying the peace of the realm was of no avail, and neither his gentle persuasions nor the excellence of his reasons produced the effect that should have resulted from them: the ambition of some among the Amirs, and the covetousness of others, with the eager thirst for rule and gain of the Walies and Alcaldes, rendered all insensible to the voice of justice—none regarded the common welfare, absorbed as they were in short-sighted considerations of what they believed to be their personal interest. Where violence could find no place, there they prevailed by means of a pretended liberality, attracting the people, more especially those of the lowest classes, by the promise of pretended advantage, and gaining over others by various subterfuges such as each man thought suited to those with whom he treated.

Thus was Spain divided and oppressed by as many kings as there were provinces; and with the clamour of their arms, the cries of their partizans, and the tumults of their discord, these leaders prevented the voice of the just and beneficent King of Cordova from being heard in the land.

Becoming convinced, therefore, that his mild persuasions were unavailing, Gehwar attempted to subdue his nearest and most troublesome neighbours by force of arms. He first sent his general with a select body of cavalry to occupy the Comarcas of Azahila, which were held as his own domains by Huzam Daula Ben Huzeil Aben Razin, lord of another territory in Santamaria of the east, which received the name of Santamaria de Aben Razin. When the troops of Cordova had taken possession of some of his strong places, Huzam Daula entreated the aid of his neighbour, Ismail Ben Dylmoun, lord of Toledo. who instantly

took the defence and protection of Husam Daula Ben Huzeil Abu Muhamad, known also as Aben Aslay, into his own charge.

Assembling an immense host accordingly, he sent that force against the troops of Cordova, whom they quickly drove from the fortresses, and reoccupied every place belonging to the lord of Azahila. This they did with the greater facility because Husam Daula was much beloved by his people, whose hearts he had won by his affability and kindly treatment of them, insomuch that all raised their voices against the people of Cordova on that occasion.

About this time, Almondar Ben Yahye Ben Hud, King of Saragossa, one of the four principal Ameers then aspiring to the sovereignty of Spain, had repaired to Granada for the purpose of concerting an alliance with Habuz Ben Maksun, lord of that city and of Elvira, as well as of Jaen. Here Almondar remained some short time to await the assemblage of troops which were to be led forth in his favour by his kinsman Abdallah Ben Alhakem; but certain well-founded suspicions which that general conceived of his purpose, caused Abdallah himself to assassinate his relation, the King of Saragossa,—an event which took place on the 10th day of the moon of Dylhagia, in the year 430.

The news of that death was presently taken to Saragossa, and on the same day the son of Almondar, Zuleiman Ben Almondar Ben Hud, lord of Lerida, was proclaimed king in the city of Saragossa and in its Comarcas. Zuleiman Ben Almondar was an excellent prince, justly meriting eternal fame for the splendour of his prowess: he was called Abu Ayoub Ben Muhamad Almondar and Almostain Billah, and began his reign in that part of eastern Spain during the moon of Muharram, which was the first of the year of the Hegira 431.

Abu Ayoub Zuleiman Ben Almondar Ben Mohamad Ben Hud, called Almostain Billah, was Sahib or lord of Lerida, as hath been said, and to that territory he united the domains of Zarcusta* and its Comarcas after the death of his father, Almondar Ben Yahye Ategibi, whose head had been cut off in his palace, as hath been related above, by his

* Saragossa.

cousin Abdallah Ben Alhakem, in the moon of Dylhagia of the year 430, when Aben Hud was proclaimed. But at a later period the people of Zarcusta, which is Saragossa, rose up against him, when he took refuge in Rot-Alyud, an inaccessible castle, to which he had removed his treasures. The despoiled Alcazar* of Zarcusta was thus left desolate during two years, seeing that Aben Hud had carried off even to the marble incrustations which had decorated the walls; nay, the whole edifice would have been ruined, had not the rapid succession of Zuleiman Ben Hud, which took place in Muharram of the next year, interposed to prevent that misfortune.†

Now about this time, Muhamad Ben Yahye, Wali of Huesca, repaired to Valencia, where he was received with much distinction by Abdelaziz Abul Hasan Ben Abi Amer, who was lord of that city and its territory; nay, Abdelaziz gave two daughters of his own in marriage to two of the sons of the Wali of Huesca, one of whom was called Abulhuas Man, the other Samida Abu Otba. The festivities and rejoicings for these marriages being concluded, the Wali Muhamad Aben Yahye departed for the east; but he had not long embarked, before there came intelligence of his death, he having been drowned in the sea.

About the same period it was that the Slavonian Zohair Alameri, lord of Almeria and of a large district in the south of Spain, fell sick unto death, and of that malady he did in fact expire in the year 432. Now Zohair had declared the lord of Valencia, even Abdelaziz Abul Hasan, who was called Almanzor, the successor to all his land and lordships, and that prince appointed his son-in-law, Man Abulhuas, to be his Prefect and Naib in Almeria, where he governed the state with much prudence; being greatly beloved by his people: Abulhuas Maur soon established himself in an independent sovereignty, which he held during his whole life-

* Alcazar—the royal palace.

† In this passage we have an instance of the change of orthography in names which occasionally results from the various MSS. of Arabian writers used by our author in the course of his work: the number of the authorities consulted has also led him once or twice into the repetition of an event previously related, an inadvertence of which the reader will perceive an instance in line eleven of the page before us.—*Trans.*

time, ruling his domains with infinite wisdom and with much consideration for all parties.

The lord of Seville, meanwhile, perceiving that his enemies had dissolved their alliance against him, no longer cared to avail himself of the false relation which he had invented as respected the pretended discovery of King Hixem the Second; but still determining to profit by his fable, he now published an intimation to the effect that the king had died, but had left certain letters, which he produced, wherein he, Muhamad Ben Ismail, was himself declared the successor of that sovereign, and the avenger of his wrongs.

These inventions availed but little with the great and powerful, who gave them no credence; but among the people they were not without their effect, and secured Muhamad Ben Ismail Aben Abed much importance among the Alamerics, with whom even the traditions and shadows of that power and authority so long held by the Omeyas were still sacred and beloved: thus almost all the people dwelling in the southern parts of Spain declared themselves the partizans of Aben Abed, lord of Seville, with whom they maintained intelligence, either secret or avowed.

In the year 432 there was born to Aben Abed a grandson who was the offspring of his son the Prince Muhamad and the Princess of Denia, the daughter of the Ameer Mu-giahid Abul Gaix, lord of Majorca and Denia. This birth was observed by the astrologers acting under the orders of the infant's grandfather, and they reported that the planetary positions announced much greatness and prosperity; but that, towards the end of his days, the full moon of that newly-born child's fortune would not only decrease, but must suffer a notable eclipse.

A year after the birth of his grandson, the King Muhamad Ben Ismail Aben Abed was about to set forth against his enemies with a large body of cavalry, when the all-powerful hand of Allah impeded his steps by means of a great sickness, from the severity of which he died during the last night of the moon of Giumada Primera, in the year 433,* when he was transported from the Alcazars of Seville to

* A.D. 1043.

those of Paradise.* The death of this Ameer was deeply deplored in all his territories, seeing that he was endowed with many qualities which are excellent in kings. His son Muhamad Aben Abed, who was called Almoateded, was proclaimed on the second day of Giumada Postera.

This prince was of singularly beautiful person, but was the slave of his passions, and as cruel as he was voluptuous: even in the time of his father he maintained a precious harem of seventy slaves, exquisite in beauty, selected from different countries, and obtained at immense cost: these were supported with extraordinary profusion and prodigality. Aben Hayan relates that Muhamad Ben Muhamad Aben Ismail Aben Abed no sooner saw himself exalted to be absolute king, than he extended his harem to the number of eight hundred damsels, all entertained for his own delight. Yet he doated on the daughter of Mugehaid Alameri with a never-failing love. Her father was the lord of Castillon, and she was sister to Aly Ben Mugihaid, Prince of Denia, the prudent Muhamad Ben Ismail having sought that alliance for his son, in the hope of assuring to him the devotion of the Alameries, which he did in part much increase by his connection with the Princess of Denia.

Muhamad Ben Muhamad Ben Ismail, called Almoateded, wrote elegant verses, which were gathered into a collection by the son of his brother Ismail, which last named prince died in battle, as before related. He was somewhat tainted with impiety, or at the least had obtained the reputation of being but slightly attached to his religion, and in all the five-and-twenty fortresses of his lordship, he caused but one Aljama, with one sole Alminbar, to be erected; but, on the other hand, he gave command that a most beautiful palace of pleasure should be constructed in Ronda, and placed therein such a train of servants as sufficed to maintain it in perpetual readiness for his use.

In the Alcazar of Seville this prince assembled, within a magnificent recess, a rich treasure of singular and beautifully decorated cups, garnished with gold and jacinth, emeralds and rubies; the bowls of these cups were made from the

* Adel Halim affirms, on the contrary, that Muhamad Ben Ismail Aben Abed, whom he calls Cadi of Seville, died in the year of the Hegira 431.—*Condé*.

skulls of such great personages, his enemies, as he had destroyed with his own hand and sword, or of such among the foes of their house as had been decapitated by his father. In this strangely furnished cabinet was the skull of the Ameer Yahye Ben Aly, with that of the Hagib Aben Hasoun, and that of Aben Choug; to say nothing of the many others which the cruelty of Muhamad Ben Muhamad Almoatahed was continually adding to the number.

At the end of the year 434 died the Wali of Santamaria, of Oksonoba, in the Algarve: he was called Said Ben Haroun, and his office was inherited by his son, Muhamad Ben Said.

CHAP. III.—OF THE DEATH OF GEHWAR, KING OF CORDOVA, AND SUCCESSION OF HIS SON, MUHAMAD BEN GEHWAR, AND OF THE CONTINUANCE OF THE WAR BETWEEN THE MOSLEMAH CHIEFTAINS.

ALTHOUGH the events of the contest into which the King of Cordova had entered with the Lord of Azahila, and his protector, Ismail Ben Dynoun, King of Toledo, were not very prosperous, yet the people of Cordova made every possible effort in the service of their lord, offering themselves cheerfully to the perils of that sanguinary and infelicitous war, in consideration of the benefits which they had enjoyed under his wise and beneficent government, and from a conviction of the perfect justice of all his intentions. They felt, moreover, that if by the hard necessities of warfare they were exposed to a needful and honourable danger on their frontiers, yet in their homes they now lived in the highest security and quietude, every man reposing in the midst of the most perfect abundance and good order when he had once returned from the field to the happiness of his abode, as if in times of absolute peace. They did not cease to bless the name of their excellent ruler therefore, calling him the father of his people and the defender of the state. At a word, he was beloved and respected by all; but when in the whole land there was no fear more pressing than the fear of his death, the event thus dreaded happened, and

he was recalled to the mercies of Allah. Some say that Gehwar's death took place in the night of Giuna,* the 6th day of the moon Muharram, others in the moon of Safer, in the year 435.

The funeral solemnities of King Gehwar were accompanied by the tears of all who dwelt in Cordova, and even the damsels who had retired into solitude accompanied his bier with the precious drops of a sincere grief falling from their eyes. These mournful ceremonies concluded, the son of their lamented sovereign, even Muhamad Ben Gehwar Abul Walid, was proclaimed king by the still grieving people. He was a quiet and good man, the worthy son of so good a father, but of infirm condition and very weak health. He received the oath of obedience readily proffered by the Aljama and Mexuar of Cordova, and the sorrow felt for the loss of his father was at length somewhat tempered by the hopes justly founded on the excellencies of the son; but the times were grievously trying, and altogether adverse to the pacific virtues which shone so resplendently in those good kings.

No sooner had Muhamad Ben Gehwar mounted the throne than he proposed a truce to the King of Toledo and the Lord of Azahila; not hoping for any very prosperous result from a struggle with enemies so potent: but as those rulers replied with a contemptuous haughtiness, the King of Cordova committed the continuation of the war to his son Walid and to the General Hariz Ben Alhakem Ben Alcasha. The latter was then serving on the frontier near Calatrava, but he hastened to assemble his forces, and made numerous incursions on the dominions of his opponents, to whose land he carried the extremity of desolation.

In this year of 436, there died, in his city of Denia, the Ameer Mugiabid, Lord of Majorca, father-in-law of Muhamad Ben Muhamad Aben Abed, King of Seville.

Zuleyman Ben Almondar Aben Hud, King of Zaragoza, was meanwhile engaged in a conflict with the Christians on the eastern frontier of Spain, and towards the country of France. This warfare he maintained with infinite constancy, performing deeds of indescribable valour, and causing heavy

* Or Juma, the Mahomedan Sabbath, answering to our Friday.

loss to the enemies of the faith. He recovered all the fortresses of Bardania, but when most earnestly occupied by that sacred war, and the exaltation of Islam, Zuleyman Ben Almondar Abeer Hud was recalled to the mercies of Allah. He died crowned by numerous triumphs, when the Lord did without doubt bestow the due recompense of his heroic deeds in those ineffable delights which are reserved for the better life. He departed from this world in the year 438, and his son Ahmed Abu-Giafar, called Almuqtadar, was proclaimed in his place: that prince was a zealous imitator of his father's virtues, and his love for our holy religion kept him in continual wars, where he proved himself to be a brave and very fortunate leader.

The King Aben Abed of Seville, called Almoatahed, likewise continued the war which his father had commenced against the Lord of Carmona, even Muhamad El Barcoli, and against the allies of Muhamad, even the rulers of Malaga and Granada: frequent encounters took place between the troops of either side, each making incursions on the territories of the other, and all causing much suffering to the people, whose crops they cut to pieces, whose flocks they drove away, and whose persons they carried into captivity. The injuries inflicted on the unfortunate inhabitants of the country were therefore constant, but in every other respect the fortunes of that war were infinitely various, and victory declared now for the one side and now for the other.

In a different part of the land events were of much the same character: the King of Toledo, perceiving that the Generals of Cordova made perpetual incursions on his territory, and caused grievous havoc to his subjects, resolved to make a powerful effort, and retaliate on the lands of Cordova by a fearful invasion; he therefore wrote to his Alcaydes, to his son-in-law, Abdelmelic Almudafar, son of Abdelaziz, King of Valencia, and to the Wali of the latter, Abu Amer Ben Alferag, who was then holding the government of Conca, for the Lord of Valencia, all of whom he required to send him troops collected from the people of Xeiba, Alarcon, and Conca, to the end that he might make an effectual incursion on the territory of Cordova. He furthermore concerted treaties with the Christians of Galicia and Castille, to the intent that being thus the more completely disembar-

passed of other enemies, he might act with the greater effect in the war on which he then proposed to enter.

In reply to the letters thus sent, Abdelaziz, King of Valencia, wrote to his son, advising him not to refuse the assistance demanded by the King of Toledo, and to all his Alcaydes he sent messages to the same effect, commanding them to assemble their forces, and go forth in the company of Abdelmelic. These alliances were formed in the year 440, and with the powerful host thus obtained the King of Toledo made incursions on the territory of Cordova, defeating Hariz Ben Alhakem, the general of king Muhamad, in numerous conflicts, and occupying many of the fortresses along the whole line of the frontier, while the valiant Hariz no longer dared to retaliate on the lands of Toledo, and could do nothing better than avoid a battle by whatever stratagem he could devise for that purpose.

And now, as Muhamad Ben Gehwar, King of Cordova, saw clearly that he could not long resist the forces of so powerful an enemy, he also endeavoured to form alliances among his neighbours, by whose aid he might hope to restrain the boldness of Dyloun, King of Toledo: he therefore wrote to the King of Seville, Muhamad Aben Abed Abu Amru, called also Almoatehed, entreating him to be his friend in that straight, and unite with him against the King of Toledo, since it was not the liberties of Cordova alone which were then placed in jeopardy, but those of every State in Andalucia. To these letters and messages the King of Seville, even Abu Amru Muhamad Aben Abed, replied, declaring that he desired nothing more earnestly than the friendship of the King of Cordova, whose son, Abdelmelic Walid, well knew, as he added, how much he was beloved by the ruler of Seville. That crafty prince said furthermore that Muhamad Ben Gehwar might therefore count on his good-will, although he could do but little to serve him at present, being himself so much embarrassed by the many enemies with whom he had to contend, and who kept him continually employed, but he concluded by the assurance that he would certainly send him some aid, although not to such effect as he could desire.

At this reply the King of Cordova rejoiced greatly, and despatched letters to the Lord of Algarve, Aben Alaftas,

requesting him also to be his ally, and send him aid against his enemies. The generosity of Aben Alaftas was made clearly manifest on that occasion, and he proposed that a triple alliance should be formed between the King of Cordova, Muhamad Aben Gehwar, on the one hand, and himself, united with Muhamad Aben Aben, called Almoatehed and Abu Amru, King of Seville, on the other, giving full power to the Vizier Ayoub Ben Amer El Yahsebi of Libla to confirm all the conditions thereof in his name.

The Viziers commissioned to that effect assembled in Seville accordingly, and after various discussions the treaty of alliance was concluded in the Moon of Rebie Primera, in the year 443, each power assuring the aid and reciprocal defence of his States to the other, against whomsoever should attempt to oppress the liberties of the people of Andalusia, without prejudice to the particular interests of either government, and leaving untouched whatever claims might reciprocally arise between them, either at that time or on any future occasion.

And now, as in this assembly the Xequcs and principal rulers of the whole district had all concurred, the Lords of Libla, Huelba, Gezire-Saltis, for example, with Muhamad Ben Said, Lord of Santamaria de Algarve and of Oksonoba, so did these all claim to be considered as forming a part of the confederation, and each demanded to be acknowledged as a sovereign power. The Vizier Ayoub Ben Amer El Yahsebi, who was of the illustrious family known by that appellation, supported this pretension, but it was opposed by Abu Amru Muhamad Aben Abed, King of Seville, who declared that those rulers were but captains or leaders who held their governments from himself at a tenancy and personal fief for their lives only; that being, as they were, his vassals, he would not consent to see them stand forward in his presence as kings of provinces. He added that his father had granted those governments only for life, although after the death of Ahmed Yahsebi, in the year 433, he had been succeeded by Abdelaziz Yahsebi and his brothers, yet it was in the same quality alone; wherefore he would not now admit them to be considered as absolute masters of the States in question. And from that moment the Lord of Seville did in fact resolve to recover those portions of ter-

ritory, and restore them, either by agreement or force of arms, to his states.

Aben Alaftas, Lord of Algarve, remained but poorly satisfied with the conditions agreed on, nor was the King of Cordova much better pleased, seeing that everything was arranged to the advantage of Seville; but the necessity which the last-named sovereign was then placed in of such assistance as his powerful neighbour alone could render, compelled him to conceal his dissatisfaction. The manner of Aben Abed had been meanwhile exceedingly courteous towards the ambassadors of Badajoz, Algarve, and Cordova, nor was he less obliging to the Xeques who had joined the assembly, yet they all departed with a certain doubt as to the sincerity of his professions, and each feeling much better pleased with his liberality than assured of his good faith.

In the year 443 died Maun Alahuas, Lord of Almeria, who was succeeded in the command by his son, Abu Yahye Muhamad Ben Maun, the father having caused him to receive the oath of allegiance as his successor before he had fully accomplished his eighteenth year. This youth was furthermore called Moez-Daula; he had been treated as a sovereign from the moment that the oath of allegiance had been proffered to him, and in his proclamation he was entitled Almoatesim Billah and Aluatic Bifadlada, with other august appellations in the manner of the Caliphs of the East.

The young monarch of Almeria was endowed with singular beauty of person and an equal exaltation of mind: prudent, liberal, and virtuous, he gained the hearts both of rich and poor: his fine qualities attracted all the sages of the East of Africa, and of various countries in Europe, to his court, where he honoured and favoured them beyond what was then done by any other king of his time. He devoted one day in each week to the entertainment and conversation of the wise men who were his chosen companions, and gave the renowned poet Aba Abdallah Ben Alhedad apartments in his Alcazar, as he did also to Ben Ibada, to Ben Bolita, and to Aben Malic, all men who were distinguished in those days for the brilliancy of their genius.

Abu Yahye Muhamad Ben Maun, called Moez Daula, had scarcely been seated on his throne when he had to maintain a

war with his brother, Sonida Abu Otabi, who presumed to question his right to the sovereignty. But Sonida could make no progress towards the accomplishment of his wishes, and far from being able to take his brother's place, he was compelled to resign himself to contentment with his more humble lot; nay, he had ultimately to implore the mercy of that good brother, who always treated him well and caused him to live very honourably in his court, notwithstanding the wrong which he had suffered at his hands.

Aben Maun, called Moez Daula, connected himself with the Walies of Denia, by a marriage with the daughter of Mughaid Alameri, to whom he gave a daughter of his own in marriage. This last-mentioned princess was a lady of great beauty and discretion.

Meanwhile, the King of Seville, by way of performing his part of the treaties entered into as above related, despatched a body of five hundred horse, commanded by Omar of Oksonoba, to aid the King of Cordova against his enemy, the King of Toledo. The lord of Huelba and Saltis also, Abu Zeid Abdelaziz Albecri, with Ahmed Aben Yahye Yahsebi, lord of Libla, and Muhamad Ben Said, lord of Obsonoba and of Santamaria in Algarve, although highly offended by Aben Abed King of Seville, likewise offered themselves as auxiliaries of Muhammad Ben Gehwar King of Cordova. They sent a certain force of cavalry, which united with the troops despatched from Badajoz, and all then passed together into the territories of Cordova.

Then the King of Seville thought the occasion a favourable one for reclaiming the tenures or fiefs which were held by Abu Zeid Abdelaziz: he therefore despatched his son with a carefully-chosen body of cavalry to effect that purpose. Abu Zeid, perceiving that he had not the means of resisting the son of Muhamad Ben Muhamad Ben Ismail Aben Abed, then gave up the city of Libla on certain conditions, and taking with him his treasures and most important valuables, he departed to Gezira Saltis.

Yet as Aben Abed had taken possession of Huebla likewise, Abdelaziz did not consider himself secure in Gezira Saltis, and the less so as he was informed that the people of the island had intelligence with those of Seville, and had made a compact with them to effect his downfall. Things

being thus, he passed over to a very strong tower which was erected in the midst of the water flowing around the island, whither he transported his treasures, and to which place he was accompanied by the most trusted members of his household. But there Abdelaziz was at once besieged by his enemies, who kept so close a watch, that no boat could approach the tower with provisions for its inhabitants. Abdelaziz, therefore, now endeavoured to escape secretly from the cruel and tyrannous Aben Abed, who would grant him no conditions of surrender, but desired that he should place himself unreservedly in his power, and now took every possible measure for preventing his receiving aid from any hand, or procuring a ship by which he might have crossed the sea.

By great care and with much secrecy, Abdelaziz did nevertheless obtain a bark, for which he paid ten thousand doubloons of gold, and in that vessel he escaped from the tower by night, with his family and the most precious of his treasures. He then followed the coast for some time, and disembarked at a good distance, when he went wandering as a fugitive through the territory of Bazal until informed that men were pursuing him by order of the King of Seville, and that his person was in imminent danger. In that straight Abdelaziz addressed himself to the lord of Carmona, who sent him horses to aid his flight, and after having entertained him for some days in his palace, then supplied him with the means of travelling and a sufficient escort, by the help of which he might repair to Cordova or Toledo, where he hoped to remain in greater security.

Abdelaziz next betook himself to Mahomad Aben Gehwar of Cordova, who received him very cordially, as the nobleness and loyalty of Abdelaziz had well merited that he should do. The men of that illustrious family to which Abdelaziz belonged had indeed been ever true and faithful servants of the kings of Spain in all times, and had given them many proofs of devotion during the flourishing period of the Omeyas.

In the year 444, the Infant of Seville, even Muhamad Aben Abed, son of the reigning king, completed the conquest of Gezira Saltis, having done which, he passed on to take the city of Oksonoba and its port of Santamaria de

Algarve, both of which he brought to submission: that district was then possessed by Muhamad Ben Said, who held it by right of inheritance, as he did Xilbe, which was one of its dependencies.

Here there came to the Infant a noble youth called Muhamad Aben Omar Ben Huseim Almahri of the commune of Xombos, near Xilbe. He was remarkably beautiful in person, endowed with a brilliant genius, and a good poet; he also possessed much learning, and as all these qualities were keenly appreciated by the Prince of Seville, who yielded to few in the accomplishments of the mind, he caused the youth to accompany him to the capital, where the rich endowments with which Aben Omar had been gifted were acknowledged by the King Aben Abed also, who soon took him into his favour. And this was the commencement of the great confidence with which Aben Omar was subsequently honoured by the sovereigns of Seville; from that time he had opportunities for the manifestation of those abilities which have rendered him celebrated both in Spain and beyond that country.

The King of Seville, Muhamad Aben Abed, then gave the tenancy of Libla as a fief to the general of his cavalry, Abdallah Ben Abdelaziz, but with the express remark, that he conferred it on him not because his father Abdelaziz had held it as his own, but for his good services. And it was in fact a well-merited reward, seeing that the zeal and loyalty of Abdallah towards his lord the King of Seville were such as to induce him to make an active and earnest war even on the lord of Carmona, whom he besieged in that very city, within which his fugitive and persecuted father had but a short time previously been generously and hospitably received; nay, Abdallah did so closely invest the place, that the inhabitants, wearied with the labours of resistance, and no longer able to suffer the many privations to which they were subjected, began to treat for the surrender of their city, declaring that they were not willing to die of hunger for a master who had proved himself unable to defend them.

These declarations, and the purpose they implied, reached the ears of the lord of Carmona, Mohamad El Barceli, and

departing secretly from the city by night, he fled to Malaga. This flight the inhabitants of Carmona soon discovered, when they at once surrendered the fortress, and declared themselves the vassals of Muhamad Ben Muhamad Ben Ismail, called Alnuatedid Aben Abed, King of Seville.

When Muhamad Ben Abdallah El Barceli, lord of Carmona, arrived in Malaga, he implored the aid of Edris Ben Yahye, who received him as his good friend, and at once began to gather forces of horse and foot to give him the assistance he required; whereupon El Barceli departed for Ecija, which still remained his own, and having there assembled his cavalry, he joined the host provided by Edris, when both together they set forth against the troops of Seville.

But Aben Abed would not accept the offer of battle, and they could bring him only to insignificant skirmishes, in which the brave men of both sides fought with varying fortune. Yet El Barceli found it impossible to recover the city of Carmona, which was his chief intent; and after many conflicts of more or less importance, King Edris returned to Malaga, while El Barceli retired to his city of Ecija.

But scarcely had Edris Ben Yahye reposed himself from the fatigues of that expedition, when he was compelled again to sally forth in aid of his friend and ally, Habus of Sanhaga, lord of Granada, from whom he received intelligence of the plots formed against them both by Muhamad Aben Abed, King of Seville, the success of which was promoted to the utmost of their power by all the kinsmen and partizans of that crafty sovereign. Habus of Sanhaga furthermore warned his friend to beware of Muza Ben Afan, who, though apparently a faithful servant, was in fact in the interest of his enemies, and maintained a constant intelligence with the King of Seville. To this latter part of his friend's intelligence King Edris replied by sending Muza Ben Afan with letters to his court, and in these letters he exhorted Habus to reward the bearer as his services merited; when the lord of Granada, perfectly understanding his correspondent's intent, caused the head of Muza Ben Afan to be struck off immediately; that done, he

replied to the letters of Edris by assuring him that Muza had already received the appropriate reward of his loyalty and truth.

But Muza Ben Afan was the cousin of Muhamad Ben Edris, lord of Algezira, as well as of Edris Ben Yahye, king of Malaga; and when the former was made acquainted with his kinsman's death, he at once disposed his measures for taking vengeance for the same. With that intent, he availed himself of the absence of Edris, who had departed from his capital, repairing to the aid of Habus, and was then in the neighbourhood of Ronda, where his friend was engaged in daily conflict with the troops of Seville, led on by the Infant Muhamad Aben Abed.

Choosing his opportunity, therefore, Muhamad of Algezira advanced with a powerful army against Malaga, the greater part of his force consisting of African Negroes. He entered the city without resistance, and being there joined by the Negroes who formed the guard of the Alcazaba, these last enthroned Muhamad Ben Edris in the palace, and he was there proclaimed King of Malaga by those Negro troops.

But the people of Malaga, by whom their sovereign was much esteemed and beloved, would not permit him to be thus deprived of his throne: they took arms against the Negroes, whom they compelled to shut themselves up in the Alcazaba, which the blacks then fortified and defended with much bravery. The men of Malaga next formed a great encampment, and besieged the fortress very closely; but desiring nothing more than to rid themselves of those who had thus seized the throne, they proposed favourable conditions to the Negroes, many of whom passed over in effect to their camp, while those who remained, perceiving that their numbers were daily diminishing, while they had not the means of replacing those deserters, no longer dared to make sallies on the Malagan defences.

The people of Malaga took care to inform their king of what was doing in his capital, and Edris returned without delay, bringing with him an increase of force, and pressing the siege of his Alcazar with the utmost earnestness. He offered the security of their lives to all such of the Negroes as should then surrender themselves to his mercy, but

threatened with inevitable destruction whomsoever he should find in the palace when once he had entered it by force of arms. By these threats and promises, Edris induced the Negroes to quit the fortress, and they all fled by night through a deep fosse, when Muhamad of Algezira, perceiving himself to be abandoned by his followers, resigned his fate to the hands of his cousin, nothing doubting but that the latter would condemn him to immediate death: but Edris spared his life, commanding him merely to depart from Spain and repair to his stronghold of Hisn Airache, where Mohamad had secured his treasures, and where his daughter was already awaiting him; the whole household and family of the baffled usurper was in like manner permitted to depart with him in all security.

Edris then secured himself in the possession of Algezira, and having freed his hands of the troubles and difficulties with which his enemies had beset him, he passed over into Africa, where he instantly occupied the cities of Tangier and Cebta. Such of the Negroes as desired to take service with him he incorporated with his army left in Spain, but all who did not desire to remain in that country he permitted to depart for their homes.

When Edris had been some short time in Africa, the Albarguetine Slavonians, Razikala and Sekan, who had been governors of Cebta and Tangier, did their utmost to cause him new disquietudes; but the people, who abhorred those rulers for their covetousness, cruelty, and oppression, were far from taking part in their projects: instead of favouring their intentions, they betrayed them publicly, and accusing them before the king, even Edris, they said to him, "Muley, these Slavonians who accompany and surround thee are traitors, who pretend to be serving thee, but are in truth of a false and disloyal heart; they are contriving thy downfall, and have formed conspiracies against thy life, but do thou suffer us to reward them as their perfidy merits."

King Edris would have examined into the truth of these allegations, but before he could take any steps for that purpose, the rage of the people, long restrained, broke forth against those their tyrants; nor was it possible to liberate the unhappy men from their fierce and terrible hands.

They dragged their victims from the presence of the king, and a few minutes later were found to have hewed them into a hundred pieces.

No long time after this event, King Edris returned to Andalusia, taking with him his younger son, but leaving the elder in Africa as his Wali for Cebta and Tangier.

In the year 452 died Abdelaziz] Almanzor, King of Valencia, when he was succeeded by his son Abderahman Ben Abdelaziz, who was son-in-law to the King Dylnoun of Toledo, and called himself Almudafar. It was much against his will that he had sent his people to take part in the wars of Andalusia, but being commanded to do so by the authority of his father, as we have related above, he could not refuse to obey while that sovereign was in life.

CHAP. IV.—OF THE WAR BETWEEN THE KINGS OF TOLEDO AND CORDOVA, AND OF THE DARK TREACHERY COMMITTED BY THE KING OF SEVILLE, FOR THE PURPOSE OF OBTAINING ACCESS TO CORDOVA.

ISMAIL Ben Dylnoun Ben Ahmed, King of Toledo, entered the territories of Cordova with a very powerful host, and defeated the troops of Muhamad, King of Cordova, as well as those sent him from Seville and Badajoz, in many encounters, finally putting them to a total rout in a sanguinary battle which was fought on the banks of the river Algodor, or Water of the Surprises,—so called from the many stratagems and deceits which had been practised by the experienced generals who had led the opposing armies in that struggle.

The forces of Cordova were commanded by Hariz Ben Alhakem Alcasha, one of the most valiant generals in Andalusia. The battle continued through the whole day, and the conquerors, who were those of Toledo, Valencia, and the land of Azahila united, pursued their retreating enemies even to the mountains that border on the Campagna of Cordova.

The news of this defeat carried dismay into the Mezuar or council of the King of Cordova, while they caused heavy fears in the city, and brought confusion to the face of the

hitherto thoughtless Prince Abdelmelic, who, instead of marching in the front of his father's troops, was amusing himself in all security amidst the delicious gardens of Medina Azahra, where he passed his hours in casting the Gereed with the youths of Cordova, who were his companions, and thought only of his sports. But the above described intelligence infused anxiety even into his heart: and the sportive Gereed was changed for the lance of war. The face of all things in the country appeared to suffer change,—the people themselves began to resign their spades and sickles for the sword of combat; and Prince Abdelmelic departed to Seville, there to entreat the further and immediate aid of Mohamad Ben Mohamad Ben Ismail Almoatedid Aben Abed, to whom he did not fail to represent the urgency of the danger which was indeed menacing the head and heart of the state.

The King of Seville, who, though but of equal years with Prince Abdelmelic, was an astute and crafty man, instead of granting him at once the assistance he had come to seek, detained him with great compliments and honours, wasting his time with exaggerated displays of courtesy, and quietly occupying his days in the gradual exhibition of his armouries, his jewels, and the other valuables of his palaces. He made Abdelmelic, meanwhile, the most flattering offers and promises; but it was not until after the lapse of much precious time that he finally wrote to his Alcaldes, commanding them to assemble the cavalry of the land, and finally he dismissed the Prince Abdelmelic with a troop of two hundred horse, assuring him that he might confide in his promises, and begging that he would consider himself under the protection of his good faith.

When Abdelmelic arrived in the vicinity of Cordova, he found the city to be closely besieged by the King of Toledo, and saw that it would not be possible to enter without fighting his way through the victorious troops of that sovereign. He thus resolved to pass round by Medina Azahra with his small band of cavaliers, hoping that the succours promised by the King of Seville might yet arrive in time to be useful, although their appearance was delayed much beyond what he would have desired.

In the city, meanwhile, the inhabitants were now be-

ginning to find themselves in the utmost need, having been totally unprepared for the calamities which had so suddenly fallen upon them. The king was very ill, and the cares pressing upon his thoughts increased his malady to such a degree, that the physicians and all the court were thrown into great alarm, and large rewards were offered to any who would venture to be the bearers of letters which the council had determined on sending to Prince Abdelmelic and the King of Seville, that monarch having now become the sole hope of Cordova. Certain messengers were accordingly found, who contrived to cross the enemy's camp, and carried the letters which the king and council had written to the Prince Abdelmelic and Aben Ahed, King of Seville, to whom they made known all their perils, declaring that they had no other chance for safety than that of the succour which he should bring them.

Aben Abed took care to lose no time when so opportune an occasion for the fulfilment of his ambitious purposes was presented to him; he therefore instantly despatched his son Muhamad with his general, Aben Omar, to whom he gave minute instructions as to all that he desired them to do. Everything being perfectly understood, he dismissed them with a powerful host both of horse and foot.

The Sevillian army arrived before the beleaguered city of Cordova accordingly, where they encamped in sight of the besiegers, and while the infantry were preparing to attack the camp of the enemy, the cavalry instantly engaged in skirmishing with the valiant troops of Ismael Ben Dylnoun and his allies. These last, on their part, received the attacking force with so much steadiness, and were encountered by the men of Seville with such determined bravery, that the skirmish was prevented from becoming a general battle only by the intervention of the night, which put an end to the conflict.

But although darkness divided the combatants, it did not bring sleep to the eyes of the Sevillian general, Aben Omar, who passed the whole night in reviewing the various divisions of his army, and in giving the needful directions to the Alcaides and captains. To ensure the success of the coming battle, he took council with the Prince Muhamad Aben Abed, and with other generals, as to the best methods of

attack, and concerting the plan of battle, they took care to provide for all the various incidents that might occur. The moment having arrived when the first light of dawn appeared, Aben Omar put his cavalry in motion, and the same being done by the generals of Ismael Ben Dylnoun, the two hosts went forth to the encounter with indescribable fury, each inspired with equal valour, and both alike confident of victory. The battle then commenced, and was a very sanguinary one, but the force of the Sevillian cavalry, joined to that of Cordova, prevailed against the advanced guard of Valencia, whom they routed and put to flight, when the whole of the besieging army fell into disorder; and although the troops of Ayahila did for some time restrain the impetuosity of the victors and protected the retreat of their allies, yet before the fall of evening the Toledan army was in full flight, being hotly pursued by the flower of Aben Abed's cavalry and that of Cordova, led on by the son of the Sevillian monarch, Prince Muhamad Aben Abed, Infant of Seville, and by Prince Abdelmelic of Cordova. Nor did the brave cavaliers then in Cordova itself remain idle spectators of the battle; large numbers of them having joined the fight, now took part in the victory, and were among the foremost in pursuit.

The crafty general, Aben Omar, then saw that a good part of what his master had committed to him was accomplished, and next considered how he might best ensure the success of what remained to be done. Large numbers of the people of Cordova had come forth from its walls, some to take part in the battle, and others to plunder the camp of the defeated Toledans; they had thus left the city without guards of any kind, as fearing no injury from their allies, whom they beheld so earnest in their defence, and at whose hands they expected nothing worse than benefits. Aben Omar now perceived, therefore, that his opportunity had arrived, and availing himself thereof, without the loss of a moment he entered the capital with the whole force of his infantry, occupying the gates and forts, taking possession of the Alcazar, and placing a guard of such men as were most firmly seated in his confidence over the person of the unhappy king, who lay grievously sick in his bed. He was but too soon made aware of what had happened, and when

he saw that his city and Alcazars were in the hands of the King of Seville, the whole extent of his people's misfortune lay clear before him. Deep affliction then took possession of his heart, and the pain of that grief bore the sufferer to the point of death, by which means he escaped from his misfortunes, and departed for the justice of Allah some few days thereafter.

The son of the betrayed king, even Prince Abdelmelic, returning from the pursuit of the common enemy, also discovered the black treachery of his allies, and filled with a just indignation, he advanced towards the gates of the city, but found that all were closed against him. Whilst still undecided, and knowing not what steps to take in a calamity so little looked for, he found himself surrounded by the cavalry of Seville, whose officer gave the astonished Prince to understand that he had no choice but to surrender himself, while his followers were commanded to leave their horses and lay down their arms.

Revolted by the nameless treachery and baseness of this demand, the unfortunate Abdelmelic placed himself in an attitude of defence, attacking those who surrounded him in desperation, and with no other thought than that of dying with his sword in his hand rather than resign himself to the mercies of so treacherous a foe. More than once did his captors open their ranks in such sort that he might well have passed through them and fled, but he was at length struck from his horse by a troop of lancers, and being previously wounded, was then imprisoned in a strong tower, where he died, rather of the grief he felt than from the hurts he had received, although these last were also many and serious.

The writers of the period relate, that among the last words of Abdelmelic were a lamentation for the treachery of his false friend, and a prayer to the God of vengeance that equal measure might be meted out to the son of him who, under the mask of affection, had concealed the face of so deadly a foe. The death of the hapless Abdelmelic took place on the very day when the traitorous King of Seville made his public entrance into the city of Cordova, and the betrayed friend expired as the voice of acclamation with

which the vile multitude received the tyrant, came pealing to his ears; yet not before he had uttered a malediction on the light-mindedness of that people who could thus give welcome to the enemy by whom the race of their beneficent kings had been so wickedly destroyed.

The favours which the King of Seville now hastened to bestow on the principal inhabitants of Cordova, with the long series of festivals wherewith he entertained the people, brought all to offer him ready allegiance; he gave the populace varied spectacles, consisting in the combats of wild beasts, and, unaccustomed to such diversions, their new master succeeded in making the ungrateful Cordovans forget the excellent Gehwar and the kindly government of that good king his son, who had done all that in him lay for their welfare.

But with Hariz Ben Alhakem, the faithful servant of his departed master, the case was different. On discovering the treachery of the pretended allies, he had retired with such of his cavaliers as he could keep together, to the Alcazar of Medina Azahra: when the death of his king, with the imprisonment of Prince Abdelmelic, reached his ears, he was seized with indignation at the perfidy of Aben Abed no less than with grief for the loss of his master: detesting the atrocious conduct of the Sevillian, therefore, he preferred to confide himself to the generosity of his declared enemies, to the favour and protection eagerly proffered him by that false friend, and took refuge with the King of Toledo. By that sovereign the unfortunate general was received with much kindness; he was indeed greatly honoured by Ismail Ben Dyloun, who well knew the loyalty, as well as bravery, of Hariz Ben Alhakem, having had frequent experience of both in the long war which that general had maintained against him.

Such was the end of the Gehwars—so did they finish their existence, and with them came the kingdom of Cordova to its close.

CHAP. V.—THE KING OF VALENCIA IS DESPOILED OF HIS STATES
BY THE KING OF TOLEDO.—DEATH OF ABEN ABED, KING OF SEVILLE.

Now in the year 452, the King of Valencia, Abdelaziz Almanzor, son of Abderahman and grandson to the renowned Hagib Muhamad Ben Abi Amer, departed to the mercy of Allah, and was succeeded in that kingdom by his son Abdelmelic Ben Abdelaziz, called Almudafar, who was the son-in-law of Almamoun Yahye Ben Ismail Ben Dyloun, King of Toledo, as hath been more than once remarked.

That powerful monarch being greatly mortified by the repulse his troops had suffered before Cordova, was now disposed to make a new attempt on that city, and the rather, as he was strongly incited to do so by the noble general Hariz Ben Alhakem, who was inflamed by the desire for vengeance on Aben Abed, the destroyer of his master's house. Ismail Ben Dyloun therefore wrote to all his Alcaldes, as well as to his son-in-law, the new King of Valencia, commanding the former to make preparation, and requesting that the latter would come to his aid with his people. Ismail Ben Dyloun also despatched messengers to the rulers of Murcia and Conca, as well as to other Walies of his dependencies, desiring their assistance for the like purpose.

But Muhamad Ben Meruan, the Vizier of Abdelaziz, King of Valencia, advised his lord to think maturely before he declared himself the enemy of so powerful a sovereign as Aben Abed, King of Seville; one too who was besides in close alliance with the lords of Castillon, Murbiter, Xativa, Almeria, and Denia, his neighbours. This advice Abdelaziz felt disposed to follow; and thus he replied to the request of his father-in-law by the most frivolous excuses.

This proceeding on the part of Abdelaziz enraged the King of Toledo, and without communicating his determination to any one of his court, he departed with the whole force of his cavaliers, nor ceased his march either day or night until he arrived at Valencia, which city he entered when he was least expected. Proceeding to the Alcazar, which was defended by Aben Wahib Ben Leboun, he took the general by surprise, and making himself master in like manner of the

city towers, he deposed his son-in-law, Abdelmelic Almudafar, from the government and sovereignty of Valencia and its dependencies. Yet in consideration of his daughter, the wife of the deposed king, he did not take his life, but banished him to the government of Xelba: this notable event took place on Arafa, the 9th day of the moon Dylhagia, in the year 457. Almudafar and his family were followed by the Walies of Conca and of Santamaria de Aben Razin, both of whom were his friends.

The King of Toledo then appointed Isa Ben Leboun Ben Abdelaziz Ben Leboun to the government of Valencia in his name,—he was one of the captains of Murbiter, and the most zealous of Ismail Ben Dylmoun's partizans: the city was held by him for that prince, accordingly, but with him was joined Abul Arbaz Ibraim Ben Leboun, a Xequé in whom the King of Toledo placed great confidence. A few days beheld the country tranquillized and brought into good order, which done, Almamun Yahye Ben Ismail Ben Dylhoun returned to Toledo, whither he took the most distinguished nobles of Valencia in his train, proposing to use their services in the war of Andalucia. But the Vizier of Valencia, Abdallah Muhamad Ben Meruan, could not resolve on surviving the misfortunes which he had brought on his lord by his well-intended councils; wherefore, yielding to his despair, he deprived himself of life by piercing his breast with his dagger.

The King of Seville, Almoatadid Muhamad Ben Muhamad Ben Ismail Aben Abed, was meanwhile enjoying the success of his fortunate undertakings. Lord of Seville, Cordova, and Carmona, he likewise possessed the greater part of Algarve, Sibla, Huebla, Gezira-Saltis, Oksonoba, and Xilbe:* but all this did not satisfy his ambitious heart, and he began to assemble troops for the purpose of attacking the frontiers of the King of Toledo, despatching in the meantime his son Muhamad to the land of Ronda, there to make war

* It would seem that this city of Oksonoba, or Octonoba,—called also by the Arabic writer Sainte Marie d'Octonoba,—was on the western coast of Spain, and near the place where the city of Faro now stands. Yet it was not the city of Faro itself, as some authors suppose, since that city is also mentioned as a separate place by the Arabs themselves.—*De Maribus.*

on the kings of Granada and Malaga, who were allies of El Barzeli, the Lord of Ecija, whose destiny it was, as Aben Abed inferred, to destroy his dynasty, according to what the astronomers had foretold long before.

On the occasion of that campaign the King of Seville conferred the dignity of knighthood on his son, bestowing on him a shield of azure blue, around the edge of which there was a border of golden stars, and in the centre of the field a half-moon, also of gold, in allusion to the changes and vicissitudes ever incident to the fortune of arms. King Aben Abed accompanied his son as far as Ronda, where he hoped to receive intelligence of the first successes obtained by the new knight.

In the year 1060, the King of Algarve, Almutafar Almanzor, son of Abdallah Almanzor, departed from life at Badajoz, when he was succeeded in his states by his son Yahye, who called himself Almanzor, as his grandfather had done. His brother Omar Almetuakil, who was then in Jabora, which Comarca he held for his father, caused him some trouble with respect to the division of the territory; and this circumstance left the new King of Algarve but little time for taking part in the wars at that time raging in Andalucia.

At this time there came into Spain great rumours respecting the Almoravides, and wonderful things were related of the stupendous exploits which they had performed, and the conquests which they had made in Africa; all which caused great anxiety to Edris of Malaga and to the Zanhagas of Granada for the safety of those dominions which they possessed in that country. Neither was the King of Seville without some fear, since he was induced to believe that these Almoravides might be the people by whom, according to the horoscope of his son, the fate of that prince was to be clouded. But he did not on that account desist from making war on El Barzeli; nor would he give himself rest until he had despoiled the Lord of Ecija of all his possessions, being constantly impelled to new aggressions by his inordinate ambition, and by the superstitious precautions wherewith he hoped to avert the evils which had been announced to him, according to his astrologers, by the stars: at a word, he was moved by every evil passion that can disquiet and corrupt the human heart.

While the King of Seville was thus extending his own dominions by destroying all the rights of his neighbours, and was eagerly adding the ruin of Malaga and Granada to that of the many other evils he had inflicted on whomsoever he could bring within his reach, he gave no thought to the advancement of our holy religion, nor had any of his expeditions the most remote reference to the propagation of the Law, or the benefit of the Moslemah. But the powerful Arbitrer of human fates and empires was meanwhile preparing a glorious day of vengeance for the aggrieved and afflicted children of the Faith: and the manner of its appearance was on this wise.

Unlike the King of Seville, the King of Saragossa, even Ahmed Abu Giaffar Almuctadir Ben Hud, zealously imitating the pious virtues of his forefathers, employed his forces without ceasing in the Sacred war, and in the year 460 he defeated and routed the Christians with horrible slaughter. He recovered from them the city of Bubaster, with several strong fortresses; and for his greater glory, as well as to the general consolation of the Moslemah, he slew King Radmir, leader of of the Infidels, in one of the battles thus happily won.

At this time there broke out new troubles in the kingdom of Malaga, where Edris Ben Yahye, now become old and wanting force of mind, was deposed without difficulty or opposition, while his cousin, Muhamad Ben Alcasim Ben Aly, Governor of Algezira, assumed the throne in his stead. The poor King Edris died some time afterwards in the prison to which he had been consigned, and in his last days there was so little account made of his existence that he was seldom or never mentioned.

The new sovereign of Malaga continued to maintain the war into which his predecessor had been forced by the King of Seville, who was perpetually extending his dominions both in Axarquía and Algarbia.*

About this time, the King of Granada, Habus Ben Maksam of Zanhaga, departed from life, and was succeeded by his son, Badis Ben Habus, a man brave and noble as his father. He too maintained a constant war against the

* Axarquía and Algarbia: the East and West.

aggressions of the Sevillian monarch; and although his resources were heavily taxed by the circumstance of his being frequently called on to repress the rebellious attempts of many rebel Alcaydes in various parts of his dependencies, he yet never lost any part of the dominions he had inherited.

But the state of things here described prevented this prince from employing his arms against the Infidels, seeing that he was ever occupied in defending himself against those ambitious Moslemah, who, disregarding what ought to have been the common cause, concerned themselves only with what they believed to be their own particular interests. King Badis Ben Habus associated in his government, and declared his successor, his nephew, Abdallah Ben Balkin Ben Badis, a youth of admirable qualities, who was the delight of his people as he was the terror of his enemies, although but in the flower of his age.

Now it chanced about this time, that Taira, the daughter of the King of Seville, a princess of unequalled beauty and admirable grace, was seized with an ardent fever while still in the bloom of her spring; and, despite all the efforts of her physicians, she expired in the arms of her father, who doated on her with an inordinate love. The pain and grief which this event caused to Muhamad Ben Muhamad Ben Ismail were so great that he too was attacked by fever and trembling, accompanied by great confusion of the head and perpetual faintings: these were followed by profound stupor and melancholy. The sick man could obtain no sleep, he was at length unable to move his eyes, and thus partially paralysed, he then looked like a mere statue. The physicians feared his death, and applied stimulants, by which the vitality of their patient was to a certain extent restored, when the pains of his condition appeared to be alleviated.

He desired that his daughter should be interred before the entrance of his palace, and would not be dissuaded from beholding the pomp of her burial. The coffin of the princess was borne to her place of rest by the most important of her father's servants; and in despite of all that his physicians could urge to the contrary, Muhamad insisted on being conveyed to a window from which he could see the procession. The funeral ceremonies took place on the evening of a cer-

tain Juma, in the moon of Giumada Primera; and the grief of the king as he saw the child of his love borne to her grave caused all the worst symptoms of his malady to return.

The stupor and melancholy from which he had been in some degree aroused now recurred: inflammation succeeded: the physicians employed all such means as their science suggested; but, although some slight alleviation of suffering was obtained, these remedies did not produce essential improvement. It is true that on the morrow of that unhappy Juma he was a little better, but towards the evening of Saturday, which was the day on which God had decreed that his agonies should find an end, the fever increased: Muhamad lost the power of speech, and at midnight his spirit returned to the mercy of God. At that moment there rose up a dolorous cry in his Alcazar; and through all the city the lamentations of his slaves and household made themselves heard.

The death of Muhamad Aben Abed took place between the Saturday and Sunday, which was the 2nd* day of the moon of Giumada Primera, in the year 461. The mournful event could not be concealed, and on the following day the Xuhudes and ministers of the king's council offered the oath of allegiance to his son, Prince Muha Maun Ben Muhamad Almutamed, who was then twenty-nine years, two months, and some days old. He was proclaimed, and led through the streets of the city on horseback by the principal Xequcs and the generals of the army, who called him Adafir Almuyad Billah, with other august titles of good omen. ۞۞۞

The new king caused the funeral ceremonies of his father to be performed with great magnificence, and commanded that he should be laid in the tomb of his grandfather, which was beneath the entrance of the Alcazar. The Cadi Muhamad Ben Ismail made the oration for him in the Aljama on that same evening of Sunday, the 3rd day of Giumada Primera, which was the night following that on which Aben Abed had given to God an account of his sins. He was fifty-seven years, three months, and seven days old at the time of his death, having been born on a Tuesday, seven days before the commencement of the moon Safar, in the

* Abu Mervan Ben Hayan says the 6th.—*Condé*.

year 407. His reign had endured twenty-eight years and two days.

This sovereign was the most powerful ruler in all Spain at that time of Alfitna or civil war: he was magnificent in his tastes and habits, but ambitious and voluptuous to an inordinate degree: he was moreover superstitious, timid, and cruel. He had earnestly exhorted his son to be on his guard against the Lantunics or Almoravides, and recommended him to make himself master of, and carefully preserve, those two keys of Spain, Gebaltarie* and Algezira; but above all to gather into his own hands and unite into one empire, the divided provinces of Spain: all which, as Aben Abed did not scruple to affirm, belonged to him as Lord of Cordova.

CHAP. VI.—WAR BETWEEN THE KINGS OF TOLEDO AND SEVILLE.
EACH PARTY CALLS IN THE AID OF THE CHRISTIANS.

THE new king, Muhamad Almoatemed Aben Abed, did not permit the councils of his father to be forgotten: still in the best of his youth, brave as well as prudent, he was not cruel and sanguinary as his father had been, though resembling that sovereign in his magnificence, and in the liberality with which he stimulated the zeal of all whom he took into his service. In the height of prosperity, and when crowned by victory, Almoatemed Aben Abed still displayed a praiseworthy moderation: he restored to their homes all those whom the cruelty of his father had expatriated, and thus gained the hearts of many grateful subjects: the sole reproach uttered against him was that he displayed but little regard for religion. It was also the custom of this monarch to drink wine, which he used most especially in the time of war: and when they were about to enter the battle he permitted the forbidden beverage to all his people. Aben Abed was endowed with an excellent genius for poetry and composing verses, in which he competed with his friend Moez-Daula, King of Almeria: but both those princes were

* Gibaltar.

equally protectors of learning and the patrons of learned men.

At this time there also died the Lord of Azahila, Abu Muhamad Huzeil Aben Racin, known as Aben Aslai. He was succeeded in his states by his brother, Abdelmalec Ben Chalf Abu Mernan, who was careful to continue in alliance with the powerful King of Toledo, Ismail Ben Dylnoun. That prince had no sooner heard of the death of Aben Abed, King of Seville, than he determined to try his fortune against the son of the departed monarch; and, with the troops which he had gathered from Valencia and Santamaria of the East, he made his way into the territories of Murcia and Tadmir, whose Walies, Abu Becar Aben Amer and Ahmed Ben Taher, had entered into an alliance with the King of Seville against Valencia and Toledo. But while he thus fell on the lands of Murcia and Tadmir with a powerful host, Almamun Aben Ismail Ben Dylnoun called for aid from the Christian people of Gallicia and Castille; who came to his assistance accordingly with a carefully selected body of cavalry.

Thus assailed, the Walies, Abu Becar and Aben Taher, wrote to their ally the King of Seville, entreating him to send them succour; seeing that they could not sustain the assault of the Toledan alone, since he was advancing against them with a very powerful host. To these letters the King of Seville, who was then much occupied by his wars with Malaga and Granada, replied by despatching his general and intimate friend, the crafty Aben Omar, of Sombos, with exact instructions as to the line of policy which he was to maintain in the assistance he was about to render, and in the general conduct of the war. Aben Omar thereupon departed from Seville, leading a vast force of cavalry, with two hundred camels, and other beasts of burthen beyond count. He left the city by the gate called Bab Macarena, but remained immediately in front of the same four days before his final departure; after which time he unfurled his banners, sounded his trumpets, and set forth for the land of Tadmir, gathering both troops and provisions along the whole line of his march.

In Murcia, Aben Omar was entertained in the house of Aben Taher, where he received the visits of the principal

inhabitants of the city, to whom he made so many promises and gave so much encouragement, that he left them full of confidence. His abode in Murcia was not extended beyond two days; but before his departure he obtained from Aben Taher ten thousand doubloons of gold, for the purpose of completing negotiations with Ben Raymond, Lord of Barcelona, towards which city it was that Aben Omar then took his way.

The Sevillian leader was received with much distinction by Raymond, the Barcelonian, and the convention between them was quickly made. The amount of succour to be furnished by the Lord of Barcelona being determined on the day when the force of Ben Raymond took the field Aben Omar paid him the ten thousand doubloons of gold which he had received from Aben Taher, with a promise of as much more when the Christian host should arrive in Murcia.

It was furthermore decided, for the greater security of both parties, that hostages should be given on either side, when the Lord of Barcelona sent the cousin of his son to accompany the army of Aben Omar, while the last-named general consigned to the hospitality of Ben Raymond a young prince, the son of his master, the King of Seville, who was called Raxid Ben Abed, promising at the same time that a force of Sevillians, equal to the army furnished by Raymond the Barcelonese, should take the field with the troops of that leader.

Aben Omar then wrote letters which he despatched to his lord by the hands of Ben Raymond's cousin, and wherein he requested the King of Seville to send his son and his people as had been agreed; whereupon Raymond commenced his march forthwith, having placed himself at the head of a brilliant body of cavalry, wherewith he set forth towards Murcia.

Arrived in that territory, he was there instantly joined by the forces of the King of Seville, with whom was the son of that monarch, even Raxid Ben Abed, who at once passed over to the Christian camp, where he remained as a hostage with the King Ben Raymond. Aben Omar then took the command of his master's troops, which were not very numerous, but with which he nevertheless proceeded towards Murcia. They found that city surrounded by the forces of

Toledo, commanded by their king Almumun Aben Ismail Ben Dyloun, who had also the men of Valencia, Denia, and Murbiter forming part of his host, with those assembled by his Alcaydes and the Lords of Conca and Aben Razin, to say nothing of his auxiliaries from Galicia and Castille; he also having called in the Christians to his aid as we have said, when those Infidels occupied themselves gladly in cutting up the cultivated fields, and destroying the pleasant gardens of the Vega.

But now it came to pass, that Ben Raymond of Barcelona, remarking the smallness of the army sent by the King of Seville, and perceiving that he could not count on the aid of a stronger body, complained of Aben Abed, the King, to his general Aben Omar; declaring that unless his Lord came to his succour with more effect, they could not venture to undertake anything against the King of Toledo, who had not only a great advantage as to numbers, but was also in a much better position than themselves, he having already formed a very strong encampment. Nay, the distrust of the Christian, arose to such a degree that he suspected a purposed treason on the part of Aben Abed, and began to believe that himself and his people had been lured thither that they might perish by the hands of the Moslemah. To render his army the more secure, therefore, he commanded the Infant Raxid Ben Abed to be placed under a strong guard.

These complaints, and the distrust existing between the leaders, produced a bad effect on the troops, whom they indisposed for action. There were also not wanting spies of the King of Toledo, who made him acquainted with all that was thus passing; while the Christians of Galicia and Castille were equally well informed, by means of their fugitive brethren who passed over from the camp of the Barcelonese monarch, Ben Raymond.

Perceiving their opponents to be in so ill-prepared a condition, the King of Toledo and his allies gave them no time to recover themselves, but forced them into a battle, which was a very sanguinary one, and resulted in a frightful carnage on both sides. Finally the troops of Seville and Barcelona were compelled to give way, and fled before their conquerors of Toledo, Galicia, and Castille, leaving the field of battle covered with the corpses of their slain.

Now at the moment when this slaughter was proceeding, the King of Seville, Aben Abed, had arrived in the vicinity of the camps with a carefully chosen body of cavalry, which he had assembled from Jaen and its Comarcas. At the dawn of day he had even approached so near the scene of conflict that his advanced guard had reached the heights above Segura; but on reaching the shores of the Guadimena he found that river so much swollen by floods that his forces could not cross the stream, and they were detained on its banks during the whole day. Aben Abed was at that moment far from suspecting the pressing necessity that existed for his succour; nor was it until he beheld the fugitive remains of his army, with the equally shattered force of his ally, approaching the opposite shore in full flight before their conquerors, that he was made aware of the disasters which had befallen the two leaders, Raymond of Barcelona and Aben Omar.

The first who had the good fortune to cross the river in safety soon made known the unhappy result of the battle; but the panic which had seized the flying troops had now become so violent that numbers of them threw themselves into the stream at places where it was impossible to ford its depths, and these were consequently drowned, their bodies being carried down by the current before the eyes of their companions who watched them from the opposite shore. This infused so much discouragement into the newly arrived troops of the King of Seville that it was not possible to lead them further; they turned their bridles and regained the city of Segura; whence, after the detention of one night only, they retook their way to Jaen, Aben Abed having the cousin of Raymond, Lord of Barcelona, still in his company.

The General Aben Omar, who had escaped from the battle with some few of his followers, now came fast on the steps of his master, whom he overtook, some few days after the grievous defeat he had sustained, at the city of Guadabullon. Here the general persuaded his lord to fulfil the remainder of the promise which had been made to the Lord of Barcelona, since they could not otherwise effect an exchange of the hostages; and Ben Raymond would in that

case bear off the Infant, even Raxid Aben Aben, as a prisoner, to the land of Barcelona.

The King of Toledo meanwhile, greatly rejoicing in the success which had attended his arms, offered favourable conditions to the people of Murcia, and Aben Taher, accepting these advantages, placed himself and his territory under the shelter and protection of Ismail Ben Dyloun, to whom he declared himself a faithful vassal; when the principal inhabitants of the city did homage to Aben Ismail in like manner.

Almamdeleoun Ben Ismail Ben Dylhoun likewise obtained possession of the fortresses of Auriola and Mulaque by a peaceable agreement; and leaving these to the care of his Alcaides, he had no sooner placed the land in tranquillity and good order than he returned to his city of Toledo, when he rewarded his generals with a regal magnificence, the Moslemah, together with the Christians of Galicia and Castille, who had been his auxiliaries on that successful day.

When the General Aben Omar had collected the sum required for his engagements in Barcelona, he set forward to that city, taking with him the cousin of Ben Raymond the king, for whom he was charged with a rich present of thirty thousand doubloons in gold. He then obtained restitution of the Infant, Raxid of Seville, whom he sent to his father, accompanied by Aben Becar of Tadmir, the latter not consenting to separate himself from the fortunes of Aben Abed. Those who saw the meeting of that illustrious king with his son, declare that he wept for joy at the sight of his child.

Aben Omar was meanwhile busying himself with new negociations, into which he at this time entered with Almutemen, son of the King Almoctadir of Saragossa, who was Wali of Lerida, which he held for his father the king above-named. Here Omar incited the nobles to much discord, and eventually caused the persecution, not to say ruin, of several powerful families, compelling them to depart from the territory. These men then took refuge with Abdilbar Ben Mugihaid, Lord of Denia, when Aben Omar persuaded the Prince of Saragossa to make war on Abdilbar

Ben Mugihaid, against whom Omar himself served in person, taking possession of several fortresses in various parts of the district: all these things occurred in the moon Xaban of the year 468.

While Almocladir, King of Saragossa, pursuing the perfidious counsels of Aben Omar, was thus rewarding the noble and generous hospitality of Abdilbar Ben Mugihaid, Lord of Denia, by defeating him in a sanguinary battle, and was then preparing to enter his city, where it was the purpose of Omar to cause all who had taken refuge therein to suffer a painful death, there came an Alcayde to Almocladir exhorting him on the part of Moez-Daula, Lord of Almeria, who had married the daughter of Abdilbar, to desist from a war which was causing him so much discredit, and rather to turn his victorious banners against the enemies of Islam, who were even then infesting the frontiers; while he was casting a shade on his hitherto unblemished reputation by the blood he was so unjustly shedding.

These reasonings prevailed with the King of Saragossa, who immediately returned to his own territories, leaving two of his Alcaldes, called Ibrahim and Abdelgehir, sons of Sohail of Bardania, to maintain the conquests he had made. But these generals, deceived by a double treason on the part of Aben Omar, were induced some short time afterwards to sell the fortresses in question to the minister of Aben Abed, the treacherous Aben Omar, defeating in that same act the views and intentions of the two Walies, Iza Ben Leboun and his brother Abdallah, both of whom had earnestly desired to obtain those strongholds, which lay conveniently near to their lordships. Thus, then, did Aben Omar serve his lord the King of Seville by means of perpetual deceptions and the craft of intrigue.

CHAP. VII.—THE KING OF TOLEDO TAKES CORDOVA AND SEVILLE—
HE DIES IN THE LAST-NAMED CITY AFTER IT HAS BEEN DELIVERED
BY ABEN ABED.

Now the King Ismail Almamun Ben Dylnoun of Toledo, perceiving himself to be favoured by fortune, and excited

by his own ambition and desires of vengeance, prepared to lead a powerful host against the territory of Cordova, proposing to take Aben Abed at disadvantage, and without giving him time to recover from the defeat and losses which he had sustained in the Battle of Murcia. He assembled his Alcaides and Xequés accordingly; his ally, the Christian King of Galicia, also coming to his aid with a select body of horsemen, clothed in mail.

With these forces Ismail Almanun Ben Dyloun entered the territory of Cordova with so much celerity that he effectually surprised his enemies as he had intended. His host poured over the land as doth a tempest of thunder and lightning, carrying desolation into the hearts of all they met, and sweeping the fruitful fields to destruction in the lapse of but a few hours. At the same time Aben Ismail dispatched his general Amir Ben Leboun to the territory of Jaen, where that leader occupied several cities, and among others that of Ubeda, of which King Ismail Ben Dyloun made him Wali, as he did of Santaberia on the frontier of Saragossa.

In like manner the General Hariz Ben Allakem took the city of Cordova, which he entered by surprise, and having done so, he proceeded with another body of cavalry to Medina Azarah, the Alcazars of which he occupied with but slight resistance, seeing that the few soldiers by whom they were guarded were easily overcome. There was nevertheless a most sanguinary conflict maintained within the courts of the royal palace, where the African guard, who defended the same, fought with desperate bravery, making unheard of efforts to save the Infant Serag-Daula, son of Aben Abed, King of Seville, a youth in the first flower of his days, who was then at Medina Azahra. But in the struggle between those who desired to take him prisoner and the guards who laboured to retain him within their ranks, the prince unhappily received a mortal wound, of which he instantly expired. The general Hariz Ben Alhakem then returned to Cordova; but first he caused the head of the slain prince to be cut off, and having placed it on the point of a lance, he commanded his people to bear it through the streets of the city: those thus commissioned being furthermore instructed to cry as they went, "Behold the vengeance of

Allah! A great and fearful Avenger is the Lord our God!" For so did Hariz Ben Alhakem believe himself justified in destroying the descendants of him who had so treacherously brought ruin on the house of his master, the good Muhamad Gehwar; even the sons of Aben Abed, King of Seville.

The great body of the King of Toledo's army had meanwhile not made halt, but had proceeded to Seville itself, which they also took without resistance, because the forces of Aben Abed were distributed through the territories of Jaen, Malaga, and Algezira; seeing that in all those districts he was engaged in warfare either of defence or attack, to the last of which his house had lately proved itself but too well inclined. The sole resistance attempted against the troops of Ismail Ben Dylnoun was in the entrance to the Alcazar of Seville, which was well defended by the royal guards. But all these troops were eventually cut to pieces, when the riches which Aben Abed had amassed in that palace were divided by Almamun Ismael Ben Dylnoun among his troops and allies: even the harem of the King Aben Abed was not respected.

The General Hariz Ben Alhakem was now appointed Naib, or lieutenant of the King Almamun of Toledo in the city of Cordova, while the king himself remained in Seville, where he abode during the six months next following. At the end of that time, Aben Abed, who had meanwhile assembled his scattered power, came with a great host before the city, having taken a solemn oath to recover the possession thereof or die in the attempt.

While Aben Abed thus held the place besieged, Almamun fell sick, and his malady increased in such sort that he perceived the end of his days and of all his glorious undertakings to be fast approaching. He then declared his son Yahye Alcadir Bila to be his successor; but as that prince was still very young, King Almamun appointed Hariz Ben Alhakem Ben Okeisa, with other Walies in whom he placed confidence, to be the guardians and tutors of the youth. He likewise joined his friend and ally the King of Galicia in that trust, being well assured of the loyalty and good faith of that monarch, and of the affection which he bore to himself and his house.

These dispositions made, Almamun disposed himself to appear before his Creator; and as the King of Seville, Aben Abed, made his way through the city gates, Ismail Ben Dyloun of Toledo departed from life,—an event which took place in Dylenda of the year 469.*

Now the Walies and generals of the Toledan king did not make known the death of their lord, but fearing lest their troops might be discouraged by thought of the loss they had sustained, they continued to defend the city in the name of that sovereign with equal bravery and ability; yet they were eventually compelled to yield to the determination and valour of Aben Abed and his forces, who were aided by the inhabitants of Seville, these last labouring for their sovereign in every manner that they could devise. The Toledan generals maintained the most perfect order nevertheless, and leaving the city by two of its gates with their munitions of war, made their way through the camp of Aben Abed, who was meanwhile entering triumphantly into Seville by a different quarter; but he did not remain therein beyond the moment needful for the security of his position, when he left in all haste to pursue the retreating Toledans and their allies.

The general Hariz Ben Alhakem meanwhile did not abandon Cordova, but remained there as Naib of the young King Alcadir Yahyo Ben Dyloun, confiding to a certain extent in his old and friendly relations with the inhabitants, and hoping to preserve the city from the hands of the Sevillians, but being also flattered, as it is said, by some of his partizans, who had inspired him with the hope that he might himself be proclaimed sovereign of that state. If that hope was entertained, it is certain that no long time was suffered to elapse before it was effectually destroyed: Aben Abed surrounded the city with his troops, and gave the general Hariz to know that he would never raise the siege until he had reduced the place to his obedience. Many assaults were given and repulsed, the defenders making frequent sallies on the camp of the besieging troops, in

* Other writers give the previous year as that of this King's death.—*Condé.*

whose ranks they made notable havoc. But Hariz Ben Albakem soon perceived that he could not confide in the inhabitants of Cordova, as he had hoped, seeing that they were divided into numerous parties; he therefore left the city by one gate as Aben Abed entered it by another. The king in person immediately pursued him on horseback, and as Hariz was not willing to give himself the appearance of flying in disorder, he had not gained a sufficient distance to secure his safety; wherefore he was overtaken by Aben Abed, whose attention was fixed on no other than himself. The King of Seville was nevertheless aware that his horse being wearied could proceed but little further, and fearing lest his enemy should even yet escape him, he threw his lance with a dexterity only equalled by the force of the blow, which pierced the body of Hariz from his back to his breast, when that general fell dead from his horse. The enraged king then commanded his people to affix the dead leader to a stake, on which, for the greater ignominy, he had also caused a dog to be impaled, and that stake he ordered the executioners to plant on the Bridge of Cordova.

Hariz Ben Albakem left a son called Ahmed, who was highly favoured and held in much honour by the King of Toledo, Alcadir Yahye Ben Dyloun; that monarch conferred on him the Alcaidia of Calatrava, an office wherein Ahmed Ben Hariz distinguished himself by the most signal services to his master, giving repeated proofs of his fidelity, as we shall hereafter have occasion to observe.

By the intrigues of Aben Omar, the Vizier of Murbitar, Abu Iza Leboun Ben Leboun was induced to leave the service of the youthful King of Toledo, to whose father, Almamun Ben Ismail, he had been a most true and loyal servant. Nay, the wily Omar found means to cause so much enmity between Alcadir Yahye, King of Toledo, and the ancient friend of his father, that the latter abandoned the country, repairing with his two brothers, Abu Muhamad Abdallah and Waheb Ben Leboun Abu Zaji, to Seville, where they were received with much favour by the King Aben Abed, who offered them Cadiasgas or governments in his states in exchange for those they had resigned in the territories of the Toledan Monarch. This was in the year 469, and in the same year Abu Iza Ben Leboun died at Seville. His

younger brother, Waheb Ben Leboun, remained in the service of the Sevillian King.

Aben Omar also incited the Wali of Xelba, Abdelmelic Almudafar, son of Abdelaziz, to attempt the recovery of his state of Valencia, from which he had been deposed by Ismail Almanun Ben Dylhoun, in the year 436, as we have related in its place. And in that attempt Abdelmelic succeeded, but did not long survive his restoration to the throne. He confirmed the Walies who had been of his party in their tenancies, gave Conca to Said Ben Alferag, placed Walies who enjoyed his confidence in Liria, Xelba, and Gandia, and declared his son, Abu Bccar, his successor. All this took place in the year 470.

When Aben Abed, King of Seville, had recovered his Andalusian states, which he had been enabled to do principally because his general, Aben Omar, had found means to keep the southern part of Spain involved in perpetual discords, excited by his treacherous arts, the restored sovereign summoned his zealous servant to the capital, when he made him his Vizier, entrusting him some time afterwards with the conquest of Murcia, which territory Aben Abed had long desired to subjugate.

Aben Omar thereupon assembled a carefully chosen body of troops, with which he successively occupied the cities of Alicant and Carthagena, Lorca, and Anriola. He was ably assisted throughout the campaign by Abdallah Ben Raxic, Alcayde of the fortress of Balag, who, when he heard that Aben Omar was about to pass by his castle, went forth to the distance of two miles to offer him his dwelling, and such slight convenience as he could therein enjoy. Aben Omar accepted the offers of Abdallah, and passed a night with him, when he held much discourse with that brave and experienced general in relation to the best means for compelling the city of Murcia to surrender, and for securing the conquest of the country. They furthermore considered the most effectual methods for obtaining possession of certain fortresses and towns by which the capital was either defended or furnished with supplies, and in the discussion of all these subjects the prudence and valour of Abdallah Ben Raxic were alike rendered manifest to Aben Omar, who made him so many great offers and flattering promises on

the part of his lord, Aben Abed, King of Seville, that Abdallah could not refuse to accompany the host of Omar, who affected a determination to do nothing without having first ascertained his opinion. They thus proceeded in company to Murcia, of which they cut up the Comarcas, and the city itself they closely besieged.

Now Murcia was well defended by Abderahman Ben Taher, the son of that illustrious Wali, Abu Becar Muhamad Ben Taher, Governor of the land of Tadmir, which he had maintained in justice, peace, and tranquillity through all the troubles of the Civil War, remaining contentedly under the shelter and protection of Zohair the Selavonian, and never aspiring to the sovereignty, or desiring any other title than that of Muthalim, or the Reconciler of Differences,* although his great riches and numerous partizans might have supplied him with abundantly sufficient means and opportunities for exalting himself to independent empire, had he been disposed to make the attempt. This excellent ruler had lived to the age of ninety, and after his death, which took place in the year 457, his son Abderahman continued to govern the country with a moderation in all respects equal to that exhibited by his father.

The siege being unusually prolonged, Aben Omar was compelled to depart for Seville, when he confided the command of his troops to the General Abdallah Ben Raxie, who succeeded, after many assaults and much hard fighting, in obtaining possession of the fortress of Mula, by the occupation of which he was enabled to cut off the supply of provisions which had previously been brought into the city freely, under cover of those defences.

The privations which then ensued soon caused the inhabitants to murmur, and they compelled Abderahman to turn his thoughts towards the best conditions he could obtain for the surrender of the town. The Wali thereupon gave the citizens a promise to the effect that if within twenty days he did not receive succour from Toledo, as he hoped to do, he would then resign the city on such conditions as he should be able to procure.

* Muthalim were perhaps more effectually rendered by the word "Redeemer," but we do not use the latter in this place, for obvious reasons.—*Tr.*

The General Abdallah Ben Raxic having sent an account of the progress of the siege of Seville, Aben Omar returned with new troops. When he arrived within sight of the city, the inhabitants of Murcia, who recognized the cavalry of Cordova and Seville, departed from their obedience to Abderahman, and unmindful of the compact they had made to await the lapse of the days agreed on, they throw open the gates and poured forth from the same, proclaiming Aben Abed, King of Seville, to be their lord and ruler.

The Alcaide Aben Taher, hearing the popular commotion, sought refuge in the mosque, when he was taken to the fort of Montacute, where he remained imprisoned until released by the intervention of Abu Becar, son of Abdelmalec Ben Abdelaziz, Lord of Valencia.

Aben Raxic lost no time meanwhile in occupying the gates of the city, and taking the inconstant populace at their word. Aben Omar also entered Murcia without delay, and the city having sworn allegiance to Aben Abed, the Chotba was made for him that same day in the great mosque. This conquest of Murcia by Aben Omar took place in the year 471.

In that same year Aben Abed, King of Seville, gave the government of Lorca to Abu Muhamad Abdallah Ben Leboun, who was subsequently seized with the vain desire of calling himself king. He then appointed his kinsman, Abul Hassan Ben Elija, to be his vizier; and this Abul Hassan, who was accounted among the best generals of his time, eventually became the successor of Abdallah Ben Leboun in the government of Lorca.

Now the King Aben Abed, fearing lest the Toledans should make an attack, on the territory of Murcia gave the government of that city to his Vizier Aben Omar, whom he furthermore entrusted with an embassy to the King of Galicia, the object of which was to detach that sovereign from his friendship with the King of Toledo. He furthermore gave Aben Omar a similar mission to his former ally the Lord of Barcelona, requesting that he also would hold himself ready to come to his aid in the event of that which he feared occurring.

On the journey which he undertook by virtue of these commands, Aben Omar visited his old friend Almutemem

Ben Hud, son of Almuctadir, King of Saragossa : of all these missions he acquitted himself exceedingly well, Aben Omar knowing perfectly how to adapt himself to the tastes of the various princes with whom he had to treat of politics, and finding means to insinuate himself into the favour of all, by his craft, by the specious eloquence of his persuasions, and by the elegance of the poetical effusions, wherewith he delighted such of those rulers as he perceived to have sufficient cultivation of taste to appreciate their beauties. The Walies and principal Alcaydes of the kingdom were nevertheless often heard to murmur at the greatness of Omar, and to censure the unbounded confidence which the king reposed in this man, who was declared to obtain immense advantages for himself from every mission with which he was entrusted, and whom they furthermore accused of regarding nothing but his own personal interest, in whatever matter he treated.

At this time King Aben Abed, the Sevillian, was making cruel war on Muhamad, King of Malaga, whose cities he occupied, and whom he defeated with great loss before Baza, a city belonging to the King of Granada, which Aben Abed also took. King Muhamad was on the point of passing over into Africa for the purpose of there assembling a strong body of troops, when he was seized with fever, as some relate, and died from the violence of that malady ; but others affirm that he expired suddenly when about to come forth from his bath.

Muhamad, King of Malaga, left eight sons, the eldest of whom, Alsim Abnustali, was Governor of Algeria, and succeeded his father in the kingdom ; but he lost the sovereignty some few years after, seeing that Aben Abed, King of Seville, did not give him one instant of repose until he had forced from his hands the cities of Malaga and Algezira, compelling Alsim Ben Muhamad to pass over into Africa with all his family.

These conquests were made by Aben Abed in the year of the Hegira 472 ; in that same year there was a great trembling of the earth, which was such that the sons of men had seen nothing that could justly be compared with it. This earthquake destroyed many buildings, and a very large number of persons perished beneath the ruins of the same.

Mosques, Domes, and Alminbares, were cast to the ground ; and these fearful convulsions did not cease to afflict the world, day and night, from the first day of Rebie Primera to the last of Giumada Segunda in the above-named year.

In the Moon of Dylcada of that same year the people of Toledo broke forth in rebellion against their King, Alcadir Ben Dylnoun. They put many of his Viziers to death, and slew the greater part of his guard : whereupon Alcadir left the city with his family, and fled to the Fortress of Cuneca on the borders of Valencia, the wildest and most inaccessible portion of his states.

CHAP. VIII.—TREATY BETWEEN ABEN ABED, KING OF SEVILLE, AND ALFONSO, KING OF GALLICIA. ALFONSO ENTERS THE KINGDOM OF TOLEDO, BUT RETIRES BEFORE THE KING OF BADAJOZ, WHO DIES IMMEDIATELY AFTER. TOLEDO IS TAKEN. DEATH OF OMAR.

THE insatiable ambition of Aben Abed could now find no repose but in the undertaking of new conquests, and the obtaining of yet more exalted triumphs. He sent his Vizier Aben Omar a second time with an embassy to Alfonso Ben Ferdcland, King of Galicia, inciting that Infidel to fall on the territories of Moslemah rulers.

Abu Becar, Lord of Valencia, and the General Aben Raxic, murmured greatly at these negotiations with the Christian king, which they declared to be undertaken without regard to the laws of God or the dictates of conscience ; and they added that the King of Seville would end by sacrificing to his ambition not only the towns and people of Islam, but his own family ; also the treacherous Aben Omar was entrusted with unlimited powers to contract that shameful alliance with Alfonso, to say nothing of the vast sums of money which that embassy could not fail to cost. But in the eyes of God all the riches of the world have no more value than the wing of a fly.

On that occasion Aben Omar received, as a present from the Gallician King Alfonso, two precious rings formed of emeralds, the value whercof was as that of cities and castles.

Nay, the workmanship of which, to say nothing of the gold, was thought a full equivalent for the cities, the tears, and the blood: Allah alone can appreciate these things. At a word, Alfonso Ben Ferdeland was induced by Aben Omar to enter into a secret treaty with Aben Abed, King of Seville, and forgetting the generous hospitality which he had received in Toledo from its king, Almamun, father of Alcadir Yahye, he declared himself the enemy of the latter: perfidiously disregarding the alliance he had sworn to maintain with Alcadir Ben Dynoun and his house, he now fell on the frontiers of the kingdom, cutting up the cultivated fields, laying waste the towns, driving off the flocks, and carrying the unhappy inhabitants into captivity. All this was done to promote the evil intentions of Aben Abed, King of Seville, who was thus enabled to desolate Andalusia with a cruel warfare at his leisure, which he did with free and unembarrassed hands, while his Christian ally was ravaging the homes of the Moslemah as hath been said. Thus did Aben Abed persist in extending his states and raising the lofty towers of his ambition upon the ruins of all other Moslemah princes.

The King of Saragossa, even Abed Abu Giafar Almanzor Almuqtadir Billah, was meanwhile preparing diligently to march in aid of Alcadir Yahye; but the inimical Fates cut short his glorious steps, and he died before he could accomplish that laudable purpose. The decease of Ahmed Abu Giafar Almanzor took place in the year 474, when he departed to receive that eternal rest which was the due reward of his labours in this world. His son, Jusuf Abu Amer Almutamen, was proclaimed in his place, and the people of Saragossa swore obedience to his will in the moon of Giumada Primera of that year.

This prince found himself involved in perpetual wars on his frontiers. He proved his valour and the ardour of his zeal for Islam in the terrible battles of Lerida and Huesca, where, with forty thousand men, he gave to the sight of the sun the most horrible spectacle that can be presented by the fierce children of war, seeing that in a few short hours he caused the streams of the Hersera and the Zinga to overflow with the blood of the slain.

The oppressed King, Yahye of Toledo, now sent his

messengers to the King of Badajoz, even Yahye Ben Alaftas, called Almanzor, entreating him to come to his aid and be his protector, when that noble sovereign congregated his Alcaides without delay, and, accompanied by a select body of cavalry, crossed with hasty marches the plains that are watered by the Guadiana and the Tagus. The fame of his arrival alone sufficed to compel Alfonso Ben Ferdeland of Galicia to break up his camp and return to his home; but he laid waste and destroyed the whole land as he passed, carrying off the unfortunate dwellers in the same, with their flocks and other possessions. By the opportune aid thus afforded to the King of Toledo, and the glorious victory obtained by the mere sound of his approach, the King Alaftas fully proved himself to merit the august title, Almanzor, with which his people had endowed him, and, well content with the result, he returned to his own frontiers.

The King Yahye Alaftas then entered Merida with his forces, and was there reposing from the fatigues of the march, when Death, who so ruthlessly cuts short all the delights of this world, disappointing and rendering nugatory the very fairest hopes, fell upon him with unexpected haste, and translated him thence to the Alcazars and eternal dwellings of the after-life.

The people of Ben Alaftas mourned his loss, because he was a good king, and all the more did they lament him since he had not left them the consolation of a successor chosen by his voice. Under these circumstances, therefore, the younger brother of Almanzor, Muhamad Omar Almetuakil,* was placed on the throne. He was then in Zaboro, which was his appanage, but finding that the sovereignty of the whole Algarve was now united in his person, Muhamad Omar instantly repaired to Badajoz, leaving Zaboro and its Comarcas to the government of his son Alabas Aben Omar. King Omar Almetuakil was a judicious and very learned man; in his youth he had distinguished himself by the most brilliant valour in war, and was no less remarkable for the humanity and justice with which he had governed those committed to his care in time of peace. And as he had given his Waliath of Zaboro to his elder son, Alabas Aben

* Fortunate conqueror and protector.

Omar, so did he now confer that of Merida on his younger son, Alfadal Aben Omar. This prince, who was a just and moderate ruler, carefully imitated the virtues of his father, Muhamad Omar, and his brother Alabas,—all three being noble sovereigns, and worthy of a better fate than that which had been inscribed for them on the indelible tablets of destiny.

While Alfonso Ben Ferdeland, King of the Christians, had thus been making a devastating war against Toledo and its king, Alcadir Yahye, the King of Seville, even Muhamad Ben Muhamad Aben Ismail Aben Abed, had by that means found leisure to extend his dominions widely in the direction of Jaen, and among other places had obtained possession of Ubeda, Baeza and Martos. He now, therefore, conferred the government of Seville on his eldest son, Obeidallah Arraxid, called the Cadi, because he held the charge of Cadilcoda in the Mexuar or council of that city. Obeidallah Arraxid was a singularly erudite prince, and a great poet as well as accomplished musician: he sounded the lute and other instruments to admiration, and sang his own compositions with a voice of wonderful beauty. On each Thursday of the year he invited the Alfakis and learned men, with all of distinguished genius, to his house, where he entertained them splendidly. To his father, Aben Abed, he gave no less than forty-seven grandsons, the children of his various wives. His Prefect of Justice, or Cadilcoda, was the Faki of the Mexuar, Abu Muhamad Abdallah Ben Gebir Lahmi, and when that wise man departed this life, Obeidallah Arraxid gave the prefecture to Abul Casim Ahmed Ben Mantur Alkisi. He likewise conferred the government of Algezira Alhadra on his son Yezid Ben Muhamad Arradi, who was called Abu Chalid. This Prince Yezid was the twin-brother* of Abed Alfetah and Obeidallah Almoated, or rather, he was one of three, for the consort of Obeidallah Arraxid, who was called Otamida, had presented him with all those three sons at one birth. He had, indeed, also had another son, who was the child of the same mother, and eldest of all his children; he was called Abed Serag Dola,

* The original is here, *Mellizo*, one of three, and not *Gemelo*, twin; but as we have no exact equivalent for *Mellizo*, the passage has been rendered by a slight paraphrase, as above.—T.B.

but that youth had died fighting at Medina Azahra, in the year 469.

From consideration for the mother of these princes, Obeidallah Arraxid had bestowed immense revenues on his son Yezid Ben Muhamad Arradi, whom he also made his Rewi, or private secretary, Arradi being very learned and a profound astrologer, having studied the works of the wise Cadi, Abi Becar Ben Altaib, with great care, together with all the chief writers of the school of Abi Ben Hazin Taheri. Prince Yezid was, moreover, the best poet of all the Abedes, his father, Obeidallah Arraxid, alone excepted, to whom he gave seven grandsons, notwithstanding this his great devotion to the sciences. As the instructors of these children, the Prince Yezid Arradi established in Seville the accomplished Abu Abdallah Malc Ben Waheb and Abed Hassen Ben Alhadsir, who was a man of no less distinction.

About this time the government of Malaga was conferred on the brave General Zagut, and that of Ubeda on Zagi Ben Leboun of Murbiter. The Princes Almamun Abed Naser Alfelah and Alhakem Mugehed, called Dothir-Dola Abul Makerim, were placed over Cordova; but the latter constantly made his abode at Medina Azahra.

Now the persistence with which Alfonso Ben Ferdeland came twice in every year to make incursions on the territory of Toledo, had completely devastated the towns and laid waste the fields of that district, insomuch that in the third year the land was found to be totally impoverished and its inhabitants ruined. After these years of perpetual desolation Alfonso completed the mission which the King of Seville and his minister, the wicked Aben Omar, had confided to him, by laying siege to the capital, even Toledo itself. The King, Yahye Ben Almamun, who was better versed in the sportive weapons and pleasures of peace than the rugged arms and stratagems of war, neither could nor would defend himself, nor did he once dare to sally forth against his enemies or meet them in the open field. He wrote, on the other hand, very pressing letters to the King of Badajoz, with repeated and most earnest prayers for aid; whereupon that monarch sent him his son, the Prince Alfadal, Wali of Merida, but the assistance he brought proved of no avail, because the tyrant Alfonso had so completely destroyed the

towns, which he had for the most part laid in ashes, and so thoroughly devastated the fields, from which he had cut the growing crops, that the capital could no longer obtain supplies: such of its inhabitants as remained in life had been compelled to desist from the attempt to defend themselves, unable to endure the privations under which they had long been suffering from these grievous circumstances, while the forces brought by their ally could not prevail to release them from the powerful enemy by whose troops they were constantly surrounded. Thus, after many hardly-fought battles, in which Alfadal saw the flower of his cavalry perish, that prince returned to Merida.

When the hope they had trusted in was thus proved vain, the Cadi Abu Walid of Beja declared to the inhabitants of Toledo that the ruin of the state was irremediable. "The kingdom in whose Chiefs there is not the principle of unity, and whose Captains are of opposite minds," said Abu Walid to the citizens, "however powerful it may be in fact, must perish as doth the wicked, and shall soon find its end; tremble, therefore, lest this King Alfonso should cause you to perish miserably, even to the last man.

Then the people of Toledo, clearly perceiving that no redemption was coming to them from any quarter, while they were dying of hunger, advised their king, Yahye Ben Almamun, to negotiate conditions of peace with Alfonso, and even to offer himself as that monarch's tributary. But the tyrant Infidel would grant no conditions, and demanded the immediate surrender of the city. Very deep and heavy was then the grief of the noble Moslemah. They determined to die in the defence of their liberty and the walls of their home: but the people rose in rebellion when this resolve was made known; unable to endure their sufferings, the multitude insisted on the surrender of the place and resigned themselves to their inevitable fate. The more noble of the citizens found means to obtain at length such conditions as they had ceased to hope for; when the mighty and ancient city of Toledo was resigned to its foes.

The conqueror had solemnly promised that "the lives of the inhabitants should be respected, and their possessions secured to them in peaceful and quiet enjoyment; that no mosque should be profaned, nor should the people be

disturbed in the public exercises of their religion. The Moslem Cadies were to be retained in their offices, and all affairs were to be judged and regulated as they had heretofore been; decided, that is to say, according to the Moslemah laws. Every man was, furthermore, to remain freely in Toledo, or be at liberty to depart and fix his abode elsewhere at his pleasure."

All these conditions were signed by Alfonso Ben Ferdeland and his principal generals, when the Christian king made his entry into the city of Toledo,—an event which took place in the moon of Muharram, in the year 478. King Yahyc, with his principal cavaliers, then went forth from the gates and proceeded to Valencia, taking with him the most precious of his treasures. And so was lost that illustrious city, and thus ended the kingdom of Toledo, to the great sorrow of all who remained faithful to Islam.

It was also in that unhappy year of 478 that the illustrious King of Saragossa, Jusuf Almutamen, a truly noble defender of the faith, departed to the mercy of Allah. He died at Saragossa, and was succeeded by his son, Ahmed Abu Giafar Ben Hud, who was called Almustain Billah,—a man of singular virtues, as well as more than common ability.

Now it was not possible that the author of all these unfortunate events, Aben Omar, should be suffered peaceably to enjoy the fruit of his perfidious negotiations with the enemies of the faith; all the Alcades of Spain abhorred him, and many were labouring to secure his downfall.

The General Abdallah Raxid accused him of holding all the castles and strongholds of the frontiers at his command, by means of Alcades who were either of his family or sold to his interest; and as this charge was perfectly well founded, the conduct of Aben Omar began to awaken suspicion in the mind of his lord, the King Aben Abed, and the latter sent orders to the effect that his hitherto trusted confidant should be taken prisoner. But Aben Omar received timely intimation of this resolve, from his partizans, and fled, first to Murcia, whence he passed into Valencia. Yet, becoming suspicious of the rulers of both cities, who had little reason to be satisfied with his proceedings, he departed from the latter city also, repairing finally to the court of Alfonso Ben Ferdeland, King of Galicia, who was then at Toledo.

The traitor was in the first instance well received by King Alfonso, who hoped to make further use of his services in the conquests which he was meditating; but Abdallah Aben Raxic, and other Alcaldes of the fallen favourite's enemies, found means to inspire the Christian sovereign with so much distrust of the crafty Omar, that he one day said to him in his own language:—"Thou, oh Aben Omar, thou remindest me of a thief, who, having stolen the fruits of his own dishonesty, can but keep those treasures until others come in their turn to steal them from him."

These words filled the treacherous fugitive with fear and suspicions; he once more took flight, and now sought refuge in Saragossa. There he entered the service of Abu Amer Jusuf Almutamen, who treated him with much distinction, and confided to his care certain matters of intrigue relating to the acquisition of fortresses on the frontiers of Valencia and Murcia. In these negotiations, therefore, Aben Omar was furnished with a congenial occupation, deceiving with his perfidious treacheries the incautious men who trusted him, and misleading whomever he could persuade to lend him ear.

The King of Seville, Aben Abed, was meanwhile apprehensive lest the secrets of his various intrigues, and the negotiations into which he had so frequently entered with the foes of Islam, should be made known to his enemy by Aben Omar: he therefore charged his grandson, the Prince Yezid Arradi, to take such measures as should secure his capture. And this was at length accomplished by the cares of Abu Becar Ben Abdelaziz of Valencia, whom Aben Omar had deceived with respect to the castle of Jumilla, which is now in the government of Murcia, but was previously in that of Valencia, where the traitorous Omar was held in abhorrence by great and small. Abu Becar therefore hired numerous spies, who kept him minutely informed of every step taken by Omar, making known to their employer the places appointed for his sleeping, as well as those of his mid-day rest, whenever he made the slightest movement. Having thus ascertained that on a certain night the common betrayer was to pass the hours of sleep at Xecura, that place was beset by those who were in the confidence of Omar's enemies, by whom the latter was made

prisoner ; an event which took place six days before the close of the moon of Rabie Primera. The infant Prince Yezid was then informed of his capture, and repaired to Xecura accordingly, where he made the necessary dispositions for his safe removal ; thus, being first loaded with chains, Aben Omar was carried, under a strong guard, to Cordova.

Through whatever place the captive passed he was assailed with insults by the populace, and even Abu Becar Ben Abdelaziz condescended so far as to despatch a certain Jew, renowned for the swiftness of his course, after the prisoner, with a copy of verses which he had made against him. These, then, the Jew delivered to the unhappy Aben Omar at Caria Jumin, where it was that he overtook the cavalcade, in the midst of which the late powerful minister was led bound.

And now, as the ruined man proceeded on his way, he wrote the most submissive petitions to the King Aben Abed, sending others to the Infant Obeidallah Arraxid also, and entreating that prince to intercede for him with his father, who, as he greatly feared, would no sooner hear of his arrival than he would command him to be put to death. In these last-mentioned letters Aben Omar said :—

“ I know the right which Aben Abed has to my blood, and this gives me fear ; but I also believe that he cannot have forgotten my services, nor torn from his heart the affection and confidence which I certainly have deserved at his hands. On these, then, do I found my hopes.”*

The prisoner arrived in Cordova on a Juma which was the sixth day of the moon Regeb, where he was permitted to remain for repose but one night, and was even then still kept loaded with his chains. On the following day he was taken forth and conveyed to Seville, seated on an ass, and surrounded by a huge number of guards on foot and horseback. The cavaliers who commanded the escort are said by some writers to have worn black armour and clothing ; they are furthermore reported to have awaited the arrival of night before entering Seville ; but others inform us that

* This passage is in the Arabic at once so elegant and so concise, that I have not been able to render it in a manner which does justice to the original.—*Condé*.

they made their entry with their prisoner some short time after mid-day; and these add, that a vast body of people came forth to gaze on the once great man in his distress, when the populace met him with insults, and rejoiced aloud in his downfall. He was finally taken to the royal palace and confined in a dark retired apartment, of which Aben Abed himself retained the keys. "The guard who had brought him to the city," according to certain of the ancient authorities, "had no sooner resigned their charge into the hands of those belonging to the palace than they retired to make the prayer of Alazar,* and offered their thanksgiving in the mosque while still in their black armour and clothing."

During the course of that same night, Aben Omar requested that a light, with paper and ink, might be brought to him, when he was furnished with the means of writing, and, in effect, he wrote some well-expressed and elegant verses to the king, which he sent by means of the Infant Arraxid, and wherein he said: "I know, my Lord, the right which thou dost hold to my life, but I confide in the love which must still remain for me in thy heart, since none can know the loyalty of my service to thee as thou dost know it, nor can any other man divine the zeal with which I have laboured in thy behalf." To these lines King Aben Abed replied in verses of the same measure, which he wrote on the reverse of the paper sent him by Aben Omar, and wherein he said: "Evil are the times which the Fates are announcing to Oksonoba and to Xelbe; deep also is the wail, and bitter are the tears that shall pour from the eyes and heart of thy hapless mother, even Semsä; profound shall be the sorrows of her inheritance and lasting the grief of her age."

Aben Omar was visited in his prison by the Infant Obcidallah Arraxid, who admired him for the brilliancy of his genius. He likewise received the visits of the Alines, Iza Alestad Abul Hecgiag and Muhamad Aben Ahmed, with those of Abu Becar Ben Zeidun, and other men of distinction, who were yet by no means well affected towards his interests. Aben Omar had at first believed that the king was somewhat moved by his supplications, and had even received intimation to the effect that his life was not to be taken;

but those visitors, who were his enemies, now gave him to understand that Aben Abed had determined on his death; wherefore the prisoner uttered very bitter complaints to the Infant Obeidallah, and said to him: "My Lord, I now perceive that my fate is determined, and the close of my destiny has become clearly manifest to me. The malignant winds of envy and hatred have carried down the light airs of life and joy which Muleyna* was breathing. Yesterday my sovereign did not propose to deprive me of life, but to-day he does but extend my hours that he may the better decide by what mode of torment he can put an end to them in the manner most pleasing to my enemies."

And in effect, after this visit of the Alimes, those men found means to excite the anger of Aben Abed so violently against his captive, that he burst into the apartment where he was confined in a fit of rage, and struck off the head of Aben Omar with his own scimitar. Speaking of this matter, Abdel Gelil Ben Wahbon affirms that there was no man whose eyes were seen to shed a tear for the departed statesman, nor was there a voice upraised to say, "Let there come a withering to the hand of the slayer!" Such, then, was the reward of the artifices and crooked policy to which Aben Omar had devoted those abilities wherewith it had pleased Allah to endow him. His death took place at the commencement of the year 479.

And now, as Aben Abed, King of Seville, perceived that Alfonso Ben Ferdeland, not content with having obtained possession of Medina and Toledo, was pouring his victorious troops over the land, impetuous as winter floods that descend from the mountains, and as he found, moreover, that the King of Galicia was occupying all the plains which are watered by the Tagus, he thought it now time to put an end to those aggressions, since he greatly dreaded the aggrandizement of the Christian king, who had already made himself master of many towns and fortresses, such as Maglit,† Maquida and Guadilhijara, which he had seized

* Muleyna: Hope.—Tr.

† Maglit. This is considered by some of the authorities to be Madrid; and the mention here made of that city is believed to be the first occurring in history.—Tr.

without finding any force to resist him. He therefore wrote to Alfonso, requiring that he should desist from his attacks on the remaining territory of Toledo, and should content himself with that city; thus fulfilling the promises which he (Alfonso) had made to the King of Seville when they had formed their treaty of alliance.

To this the King of Galicia replied that he was still ready to perform all that he had promised, and in proof of this declaration he sent Aben Abed five hundred cavaliers to assist him in his attempts on Granada. He furthermore assured his ally that he had forgotten no part of his compact, but was prepared to march a select body of cavaliers, for the service of the King of Seville, into Andalusia; but he added that the towns he had taken were his own and those of the King of Valencia, who was also his friend and ally. For so did Alfonso now call Yahve Ben. Almamun, although the latter was in fact the compelled tributary and vassal of the Christian king.

The body of cavalry thus announced did, in fact, enter Andalusia, all clothed in their armour of iron; and being considered the auxiliaries of Aben Abed, they met no resistance, but remained during three days before the gates of Seville, after which they returned to Xiduna, where the king then was.

Much amazed at the sight of this force, Aben Abed then spoke with the Christian commanders, whom he ordered to return to their master, declaring that he was about to make peace with the King of Granada, and required no further succours against him. But in his secret mind Aben Abed had already begun to meditate the ruin of Alfonso Ben Ferdeland. The Christians therefore returned within their borders, but they devastated the lands of Toledo on their line of march, made prey of all the flocks they could find, and led captive such women and children as they could get into their hands.

Aben Abed then wrote to the Kings of Granada, Almeria, and Algarve, proposing to them that an assembly should be held for the discussion of such matters as concerned the defence of the state and the common weal of all the Moslemah of Spain; whereupon it was agreed that a congress or junta of Cadies should be assembled at Seville; the King of

Granada sending his Cadilcoda, and the sovereign of Badajoz his Cadi, Abu Ishac Ben Mokina. Abu Giaffar of Alcolia was the ambassador of Granada. The Vizier Abu Becar Mohamed arrived from Cordova with Abdallah Ben Zeidun; Abul Walid of Beja likewise appeared. All these Cadies assembled in the Aljama of Seville, where they were joined by the Cadi of that city.

Now the opinion of Abu Becar Ben Adahim was expressed to the effect that they should write to Jusef Ben Taxfin, Prince of the Almoravides, whose name, and his conquests in Africa, had become highly celebrated in Spain, nor was there any one of the assembly who opposed himself to this opinion, with the sole exception of Zagût, the Wali of Malaga, who declared that to invite the conqueror of Mauritania into Spain was not advisable. He added that Jusef Ben Taxfin might very probably destroy the power of Alfonso, but that he would then almost certainly place chains on themselves which they might afterwards find it difficult to break. He declared that if they were all of good faith and would cordially unite, with no other object than the true interest of religion, they would without doubt obtain the blessing of God, by whom they would be aided in the conquest of their common enemy, the Christian King of Galicia, who had owed his aggrandisement solely to their own discord and divisions. The Cadi concluded by saying: "Be united, and you cannot fail to be conquerors; but do not suffer the ancient dwellers on the sandy deserts of Africa to plant their feet on the pleasant fields of Andalusia and Valencia." But this advice was not followed; on the contrary, Zagut was treated as a bad Mosleman, and as one not in communion with those of the Faith.

The King of Seville, Aben Abed, now desiring to gain the good-will of the King of Algarve, demanded the hand of a beautiful daughter of that sovereign in marriage, and a treaty of peace was formed between those monarchs; while Omar Ben Alaftas, King of Badajoz, was charged to write letters, in the name of all the Ameers of Spain represented in that assembly, requesting the Prince of the Almoravides to pass into Spain for the purpose of restraining the pride of King Alfonso, who was casting thunders and lightnings around him, which were threatening the total ruin of Islam.

Ambassadors were then appointed, who were to be the bearers of these missives into the land of Mauritania.

CHAP. IX.—OF THE ALMORAVIDES, AND THEIR WARS IN AFRICA.

AND now, since the Almoravides and their princes became masters of Spain, it will not be inopportune here to give a short notice of that Moorish people, with a sketch of the origin of their most famous conquests; which were, in fact, the cause of their admission into Andalusia. We will first describe the origin of the Multimines, or Almoravides of the tribe of Lamta, who came from the Desert which extends along the east of Africa, with their General, Abu Bekir; whose origin we will also declare in this place, together with the causes which moved him to leave the Desert, and the manner in which he rose to the government of the tribes, thus giving rise to a new and powerful empire on the coasts of Africa; those lands, namely, which lie on the hither side of the Mountains of Daren, and which the ancients called Mauritania.

The Cabila, or Family of the Multimines, derived its origin from a tribe of still higher antiquity, called the Lamtuna, from the name of their first known ancestor, who was called Lamtu. He was the kinsman of Gudala and Mustafa, who were both chiefs and progenitors of the tribes that bore those names. These men made boast of their descent from another yet more ancient and noble tribe, called that of Sanhaga, of the old blood of Humair, which was that of the first kings of Yemen, or Arabia Felix, where their ancestors dwelt, without deigning to mingle their race with that of the men of Barbary, nor ever permitting their daughters to enter the families of the latter, by marriage with their sons.

The tribe of Sanhaga departed for Yemen and retired into the Desert, in consequence of certain wars, the result of which must otherwise have been to compel them to that mingling of races, and communion with the men of Barbary, to which they were not content to submit. Being poor, they used but one piece of clothing, yet this sufficed to wrap the whole person; and other writers than those we have

hitherto followed have even declared that from this vestment, which was called Lamt, was derived the Cabila denomination of the Multimines, and not from that of their forefather Lamtu or Lanta, as the authors first consulted affirm. Yet the assertion that they drew their appellation from the name of their progenitor of the older times is the more satisfactorily authenticated, as well as the more probable relation.

These tribes did not dwell in cities, nor had they any fixed abiding place, but wandered through various parts of the African deserts with their camels and tents, which they removed as the seasons demanded, and as the requirements of time and place made needful. They thus went wandering, as chance directed, from province to province and from country to country, until they finally made their abode in the deserts of Africa: in that part namely which men call the Upper, or Interior Africa, and the cause whereby they were subsequently induced to abandon those deserts is related by their historians in the following terms.

They tell us that a man named Yahye Ben Ibrahim, of the Cabila of Gudala, having proceeded in pilgrimage to the city of Mecca in Arabia, paid a visit on his return to that of Cairvan, which is at the distance of three days' journey from Tunis, and to the south of the last-named city. Here Yahye Ben Ibrahim, as he delayed for some time to examine the remarkable objects presented by the place, its Aljamas, its schools, and other institutions of similar character, met an Alfaki of the Aljama, who was called Abu Amram, a native of the city of Fez, and conversing with this man, the Faki inquired of the pilgrim from what land he had come, to what nation he belonged, and to which of the four orthodox sects of Islam he was attached. The pilgrim replied that the people of his country possessed neither science nor letters, and had scarcely any religion, still less the knowledge of those sects whereof the Alfaki had spoken; he added that the tribes of his people lived entirely apart from the intercourse of cultivated men, that they dwelt in the midst of deserts, and saw nothing more exalted than herdsmen or a few wandering merchants, whose sole learning consisted in buying and selling and increasing their gains. But that notwithstanding all this, the dwellers in his land and those

abiding in other parts of the desert were not so barbarous and ferocious but that they desired to learn things useful, and would fain know something of letters and religion, being for the most part of good dispositions and very gentle of heart, despite the rustic simplicity of their manners. Yahye Ben Ibrahim concluded by begging the Faki Abu Amram to consider if he had not some one among his disciples who might be willing to go with him into the deserts, there to instruct the people of his country.

Abu Amram replied that he would do what he could in the matter, and did in effect propose it to his disciples; but there was not one among them who was found willing to do as the pilgrim desired; whether because of the distance between Cairvan and the Desert into which they were required to go, or because they dreaded the perils and difficulties of a way so little known, and which a task so arduous presented, we do not find deduced.

Yahye Ben Ibrahim was now about to take his way to the Desert and leave Cairvan, but before his departure Abu Amram gave him certain accounts of a Faki called Abu Izag, who lived in the kingdom of Suez, in the land of Almagrob, and was greatly venerated by the Moslemah for his learning and the purity of his life; insomuch that he would doubtless have influence enough to find among his disciples such a teacher for his people as the pilgrim desired and as those dwellers in the desert needed. Abu Amram furthermore supplied the pilgrim with letters of recommendation to that Alfaki of Suez, requesting him to promote the wishes of Yahye Ben Ibrahim with what diligence he could.

The pilgrim then departed, and presenting his letters to Abu Izag, he was very well received by that Alfaki, who assisted him to terminate the affair in question as he desired, and gave him a master for his people in whom he, Abu Izag, had much confidence. This was Abdallah Ben Yasim, who had studied the sciences at Andalusia for seven years, and was a man of great learning and distinction; nor did he refuse his concurrence in the work proposed, but set forth with Yahye Ben Ibrahim, and they arrived in due time at that part of the desert wherein the tribe of Gudula was making its abode. The master was there very cordially welcomed by all the Cabila; he soon saw himself surrounded by some

seventy Xequcs of the most noble in the land; and as the nation was of honourable and humane dispositions, these men all held their learned teacher in the highest esteem, treating him with as much consideration as they would have done had he been the lord and father of them all.

At length Abdallah perceived himself to be in so much authority with them that he ventured to command the arming of the tribe, and sent them forth to make war on a neighbouring Cabila, which was no other than that of Lamtuna. His commands were obeyed with ready submission, and the people acquitted themselves so valorously, that they compelled the Lamtunas also to acknowledge the authority of their Xequc and master, Abdallah Ben Yasim. In like manner, and with the same bravery and good fortune, did they subsequently bring to his obedience all the other Cabilas of the Desert, greatly increasing the power and reputation of the Xequc thereby, as they did likewise the importance of their own tribe of Gudula. Finally, the learned teacher, Abdallah Ben Yasim, was considered to be the sovereign of that tribe, as he was of the tribe of Lamtuna, seeing that the Amcer of the Lamtunics, Abu Yahye Zacaria Ben Omar, had declared himself his disciple, following the counsels of Abdallah Ben Yasim, whether for peace or war, and doing nothing without his approbation.

At no great distance from the tract of country occupied by the Cabila of Lamtuna, there was a rude and wild district consisting principally of a chain of hills, within whose asperities there dwelt certain barbarians who were acquainted with no religion, and whom the Xequc Abdallah Ben Yasim desired to instruct; but they despised his teaching, and paid no regard to his admonitions; whereupon the Xequc commanded that unsparing war should be made on those recusants; and he committed the conduct thereof to the people of Lamtuna, who performed his behests with a ready obedience, which was fully equalled by the bravery and constancy of their demeanour in the battles which ensued.

The Chief, or King of Lamtuna, Abu Zacaria Yahye, went forth against the Hill-people with a thousand cavaliers of his Cabila, and after many skirmishes engaged them in a battle which proved to be a very obstinate and perilous contest. The tribe of Lamtuna were a light and active, but

very powerful and robust race: excessively bold, and well inured to the hardships and exercises of war, they were kept in the constant practice of the same by their almost perpetual struggles with those barbarians of the hills already mentioned, and with other Cabilas who were their enemies. They knew how to range their troops in order of battle, and were accustomed to place in the foremost ranks of their infantry, men who used very long lances, which they fixed in the earth; these foot-soldiers were so resolute and proud that, according to Abu Oveid of Bejer, they were never known to turn their backs on the enemy in any battle, and would always rather die where they stood, than give way or yield a foot of ground to the foe. They would never fly, however vast the multitude of the enemy opposed to them; and this unflinching courage, with their brave determination to conquer, enabled them almost always to make a terrible carnage among the ranks of the foe, insomuch that in these wars with the barbarians, the latter ever lost many more of their numbers in contest with the foot-soldiers than with the cavalry. At a word, the tribe of Lamta remained master of the field on this occasion as on many others, compelling the men of the hills to fly in much disorder, when the victors plundered their tents, and divided among themselves such spoil as they found therein.

This victory cost the Lamtunas a large number of their men, and the Xequé Abdallah Ben Yasim, remarking the courage and steadiness which they displayed in the fight, bestowed on those of the tribe of Lamtuna the name of Murabitines or Almoravides; that is, Men of God, or such as have given themselves spontaneously and of free will to the service of Allah. Considering further the undaunted bravery and steady persistence with which the men of Lamtuna sustained all the hardships incidental to warfare, Abdallah began to think that, with the care and ability which he for his part could bring to the guidance of such warriors, he might be able to make himself master of all Mauritania and the lands of Almagreb. Wherefore, to excite at once their vanity and courage, with the intent to lead them to the attempt which he desired to make, Abdallah Ben Yasim addressed them as follows:—

“ Oh noble Almoravides of Lamtuna, yours is the gift of

an invincible constancy, and ye have even now conquered all our enemies. If, then, ye would solemnly devote your energies to the service of God, and to the extension of his holy Law, I see well that you would readily overcome all the difficulties that might present themselves, and would quickly cast behind your backs whatever obstacles you might find on the glorious and laudable path which you must tread to ensure that Paradise which is the certain reward of all who labour for the Law, and which could not fail to crown your good works."

Having thus disposed the hearts of his people to listen to his counsels, the Xequé Abdallah soon persuaded them, by the amenity of his words and by the promise of future happiness, to depart for the deserts, and make war on the men of Barbary, who were their neighbours. They speedily rendered themselves masters of Sigilmesa, Dara and other provinces belonging to the Ameers of Magaraba, who were princes of the tribe of Zeneta, which was then governed by Mesuad Ben Banud Ben Hiazron Ben Falful Alazari.

The people of Lantuma, led on by their King, the victorious Abu Yahye Zacaria, were joined by those of Usafa and Arafa, when they commenced a war on Mesuad Ben Banud, from whom they took the province of Magaraba, in their first campaign. That district conquered, they passed on to the territory of Dara, of which they likewise made themselves masters. But in a sanguinary encounter which the tribe of Lantuma had with that of Gudala, Abu Yahye Zacaria died, fighting as a good soldier should do; yet even this did not prevent his people from obtaining the victory.

The brave Abu Yahye Zabaria being thus slain in battle by those of the Cabila of Gudala, the Xequé Abdallah, by his sovereign authority, elected and named Ameer, a brother of the dead chief, called Abu Bekir son of Omar, who was the son of Tarkit, of the tribe of Zanhaga, and of the ancient blood of Zohair, who was very well received by the people of Lantuma, from whom he received the oath of allegiance, as he did also from those of Sigilmesa and Dara. The new Ameer Abu Bekir then passed on towards the district of Masamuda, which is on the opposite declivities of the mountains of Daren: there he chose the lands of Agmat, Cilana, and Ezilira, as a commodious abiding-place for his

people; who sat themselves down there in the year of the Hegira 450.*

Now the principal inhabitants of the country, submitting themselves to his obedience, had gone forth to meet Abu Bekir, and that ruler fixed his abode in the city of Veriquia, where he dwelt in company with his Imaum or Xequo, Abdallah Ben Yasim. But the latter could not rest without attempting new conquests; and although he appeared to advise the making of these acquisitions for Abu Bekir, it was in fact for himself that he designed the benefit, since the real power and sovereignty were in truth vested in his person, and the essential force of the government lay in the hands of the Imaum Abdallah, the appearance of authority being all that was left to Abu Bekir. It chanced, then, that as Abdallah, having made an incursion on the district of Tamisna, was seeking to subject the natives of that tract to his rule, he found himself received by those men, who were Moslemah, in a manner very different from his previous experience as respected other nations; nay, in the predatory visit he then made to them, they struck him through with a lance, and he died.

The King Abu Bekir felt much grief for the loss of his Imaum, but he was crafty enough to secure to himself the possession of the whole authority which he had before divided with the Teacher; he made himself master of the city of Agmat, in Veriquia, and by degrees contrived to obtain the unquestioned lordship of the whole district, to the different parts of which he sent his governors and administrators, retaining the inhabitants in his obedience by the fears which he inspired, seeing that his forces were constantly increased by new arrivals from the deserts, and were always maintained by him in well-appointed and formidable bands. Nay the number of the warriors became at length so great that it surpassed that of the inhabitants, and in the year 460 it was found that the people had no longer space wherein to abide, when a change became indispensable.

Then the Xequos and principal inhabitants presented themselves to the King Abu Bekir, describing the difficulties that all were enduring from that cause, and declaring,

* A.D. 1058.

in the name of the commonwealth, that these difficulties, becoming every day more pressing, could no longer be supported. The King replied, saying, that their complaints were just, and that since they found their present dwelling-place too closely confined, and their abode therein too incommodious, they would do well to choose a convenient site whereon they might build another city, in which they with his people could dwell without restraint.

The Xeques considering that this reply was not unsatisfactory, proceeded to the selection of a site, and having unanimously agreed on a place, called Eilana or Heimara, they came to make known their decision to Abu Bekir, to whom they said, "Oh Ameer, we have now discovered a convenient place, and have chosen it according to thy desire and our own: it is in the district of Eilana, and there will we build our city."

The King Abu Bekir Ben Omar then mounted his horse, and followed the guides, with whom went forth all the people, whether of the Multimines or Masamudes, then dwelling on the further side of the mountains of Daren. They thus arrived altogether at a grove and plain, on which now stands the city of Marruccos,* but where was then no other inhabitant than the lions, tigers, mountain goats, ostriches, and other animals such as are wont to be found in desert-places, seeing that the plain then brought forth nothing but the buckthorn, wild bay-tree, and other uncultivated shrubs. But with all this the site pleased the king, who perceived it to have many qualities rendering it proper for the foundation of a city; as, for example, an abundance of pasture for the flocks that must feed around, with a fresh coolness rendering the air very agreeable.

They soon began to trace out the future streets and squares for markets, plans for houses and public buildings were also drawn, and the assembled people set joyfully to work at the necessary preparations. But no man yet thought of surrounding the new city with a wall and towers, these having been afterwards erected by Aly Hassan, second king of the Almoravides, as we shall relate hereafter. The first visit of the King Abu Bekir to the

* Morocco.

spot on which he founded the city of Marruecos was in the year 462.*

Abu Bekir was thus employed in the commencement of his new city and the principal edifices thereof, when he received intelligence from the Cabila of Lamtuna to which he belonged, to the effect that the Cabila of Gudala, with which his own had been at feud from old times, had sallied forth against the Lamtunies, in whose territories they were making grievous ravages. The messengers added that the enmity on both sides had increased to so fierce a hatred as to leave small prospect of the war being terminated in any other manner than in the extermination of one or other of the contending Calibas, Gudala or Lamtuna.

These accounts caused much sorrow to King Abu Bekir, who saw himself compelled to abandon the occupation which then employed him; he appointed as his successor and lieutenant in the place, a cousin of his own, who was called Juzef Ben Taxfin† Ben Ibrahim Ben Tarkit Ben Weztaktir Ben Mansur Ben Misala Ben Tamin Ben Bagali. He was of the Cabila of Zanhaga, and the ancient blood of Homair, and in the person of his grandfather Ibrahim Ben Tarkit were united the two branches of the family whence proceeded the first Ameers, his predecessors, as already mentioned,—Abu Yahye Zacaria namely, and Abu Bekir.

The Amcer Abu Bekir then divided his whole force into three parts: with two of these he proceeded by forced marches to the succour of his Cabila of Lamtuna, and left the third in Sus Alaksa, to guard the site of the new city, under the command of his cousin Juzef Ben Taxfin Abu Jacob.

CHAP. X.—OF THE CALIPHATE OF JUZEF BEN TAXFIN.

It will now be desirable that we should give a just idea of the character of this Caliph. Juzef Ben Taxfin Ben Ibrahim Ben Tarkat Ben Mansur Ben Misala Ben Watmeli Ben

* A.D. 1070.

† Taxfin, Texfin, or Taxifin; these forms of the name being used indifferently by the same authors.

Talmeit, was a descendant of the noble race of Homair of Zanhaga, while the mother that bore him was of Lamtuna : she was called Fatima, and was a daughter of Omar Ben Syr Ben Abi Bekir Ben Yahye Ben Wah Ben Wataktir. The complexion of Juzef Ben Taxfin was a dark brown, but he had comely features, and was of good stature, although his figure was slight ; his eyes were large and brilliant, they were also well opened ; he had strong and bushy eyebrows ; his beard was handsome ; the moustache of his upper lip turned back, and was not so dark as his hair. He had a pleasing voice, and to these, his external qualities, he added a kind heart and generous mind. Juzef Ben Taxfin was a just and prudent governor of his people, brave and formidable to his enemies ; in war he was ever mindful of the security and defence of his states, and was renowned on his frontiers for the bold determination with which he repelled all aggression. A lover of war, which he conducted with infinite intelligence and much good fortune, he had, nevertheless, the most valuable qualities of a peaceful ruler. He was liberal in the extreme to others, although grave and austere in his own habits, paying no regard to the decoration of his person, and wearing only the simplest vestments, but adjusting these with the utmost propriety, and with a rigid attention to cleanliness. He was exceedingly temperate and moderate in the enjoyment of pleasure, in whatever form, mild in demeanour and gentle in conversation. The fact that Allah had created him for great things was nevertheless manifest in his whole person, which suited well with the destiny of him who was to bring over to Islam so large a part of the world. The vestments of Juzef Ben Taxfin were of wool, nor did he ever use any of other textures ; his food was bread and the flesh of camels, or other powerful animals, but he ate only in very small quantities, and never in his life was he known to complain of the mode of preparation of the meats set before him, or of the quantity and quality of the same. He was of a most equal temper, and in all his days had never endured any sickness, until that malady had declared itself, by the agency whereof it pleased God to remove him to the enjoyments and recompenses of another life : in his case these last were without doubt very glorious, since he had constantly

laboured for the propagation of Islam, and had caused the knowledge and adoration of the power of Allah to be extended through many lands. By means of Juzef Ben Taxfin the praises of God were made to sound in Spain as well as in Almagreb, from more than one thousand Alminbares and nine hundred Alminars. The empire of this sovereign extended over widely separated regions, his authority being acknowledged from Medina Fraga, near the confines of Afranc—which is France—and the extreme east of Spain, even to the ultimate limits of Santerin and Alisbona, which lie on the shores of the Great Ocean, or to the west of that country, comprising a length of more than three and thirty days' journey, with a width of almost equal extent.

In the West of Africa the dominions of Juzef Ben Taxfin were also wide, extending from Gezira Becri Margata to Tangiers, nay even to the extremity of the ulterior Negritia, and to the Gold Mountains in the land of the blacks. All this without the interposition of any power or lordship opposed to or distinct from his own, for Juzef Ben Taxfin had none such in all his states.

The commands of this monarch and the enforcement of his will were ever in harmony with the voice of God, and in conformity with the sacred injunctions of his law. In the tributes and contributions which he exacted, Juzef held close to the legal restrictions and traditions of Islam, as he did in respect to the burthens which he laid on the Infidels, according to the terms in which each had made his submission. With the utmost liberality there was nevertheless so exact an order and so wise an economy in all his regulations, that after the death of this Caliph the sum of three hundred thousand arrobas* in silver was found in his treasury, with five thousand and forty arrobas in gold, all in doubloons. He administered his states with the most impartial justice, but that justice was tempered by mercy. Kind and friendly towards all beneath his sway, he more particularly honoured and showed respect to the Alsakees and Alimies,† whom he admitted to his most intimate society, and whose counsels he followed in all his resolves, affixing a high value to their

* The arroba is a weight of somewhat more than 2 lbs. avoirdupois.

† Priests and learned men.

words, and listening with care and profit to the opinions of those pious and learned persons. He was of sound understanding and excellent disposition; modest and humble, all the virtues appeared to have been accumulated in his person, and, as was well remarked by the accomplished Doctor Muhamad Aben Amid, it seemed that in him each of these virtues was labouring in emulation with the others to ascertain which of them should arrive at the highest perfection.*

Juzef Ben Taxfin was born at Velad Sahara in the year 400, and his death took place in the year 500; so that he attained the age of one hundred years. He passed the greater part of his life in Almagreb, and abode there more especially from the time when he succeeded to his cousin, the Amcer Abu Bekir Ben Omar, to the destined moment when the latter departed to the mercy of God, which was a period of forty-three years; but he then remained in Andalusia, from the period when he deprived the Amcers of Spain, more especially the King of Granada, Abdallah Ben Balkin, of their sovereignty, until his own departure from life, which was a period of seventeen years, as we shall show hereafter. His principal Vizier or chancellor was his son-in-law, Syr Ben Abi Bekir, and the sons who succeeded him after his death were Temin, Abu Bekir, Liman, Ibrahim, Cuba, and Rakia.

From the moment when Juzef Ben Taxfin had been left in charge of the government and caliphate of Marruccos, with that of the provinces of Western Africa, as the Naib or lieutenant of his cousin Abu Bekir, he set himself to rule those committed to him with infinite prudence and ability, soon becoming so perfectly acceptable to the people, as well as the army, that he could not but perceive before him the prospect of an eventual exaltation to the absolute sovereignty of the State, whatever might have been the purposes entertained by his cousin as to the succession.

The progress of the new city received his particular attention, and purchasing a piece of land in the immediate vicinity of the same, he then caused his pavilion of skins to

* It is to be regretted that the life of this ruler does not justify the praises here given him, and which would appear to be extracted from the eulogistic effusions of some contemporary author.—*TR.*

be raised, that he might thus more effectually superintend the works, and enforce the necessity of activity among the people. And here his first care was to erect a mosque for prayer, but that accomplished, he next constructed an Alcazaba or small fortress, which was called the Alcazar of the Rock: this he destined to contain his arms and principal treasures. In the labours of the mosque Juzef Ben Taxfin took part in person with his own hands; he prepared the clay for the bricks in company with the other labourers, thereby presenting an example of zeal and moderation to all who surrounded him. May Allah reward every man who shall imitate him in works of equal merit!

And this town, thus commenced, is now the noble city of Morocco, standing in a delicious site, with a rich abundance of pastures within convenient distance; a soil yielding fruits of every kind, and a plentiful supply of water,—insomuch that whoever desires to possess a well has but to dig to a slight depth, when he finds a pure and sweet water in sufficiency. The place was thus inhabited even from the first by a large number of people, who gladly made their dwellings on a spot so pleasant; they also began to erect the walls, but these were not completed in the life of Juzef Ben Taxfin; they were finished by his son in the space of eight months, and this was done in the year 526, but the walls then raised have since that time been much extended by his successors in the state. They were more particularly enlarged and strengthened by the Ameer Amumenin Abu Juzef Jacob Almanzor Ben Juzef Ben Abdelmumin Ben Aly Alcumi, Prince of the Almohades, at the time when that dynasty made itself master of Almagreb, but the city did not cease to be head and chief, the capital and principal town of the empire of the Almoravides, while that family reigned. Nay, it also retained the supremacy during nearly all the time of the Almohade supremacy, and until one of the princes of that dynasty removed his court to the noble and ancient city of Fez; as we shall see at a more advanced period of our history.

After the lapse of a year from the time when Abu Bekir Ben Omar departed from the land, Juzef Ben Taxfin had so largely increased his power and greatness that on making the review of his forces he found no less than forty thousand warriors

under his command. With that host he proceeded to Wadi-Mulua where he divided his army into five parts, four of which he committed to the charge of four generals, who were Muhamad Ben Temin Agcederati, Amran Ben Zuleyman El Mazuki, Modare El 'Tekleti, and Syr Ben Abi Bekir El Lamtuni: to each of whom he gave the command of five thousand men of his own Cabila, furnishing all with exact instructions and regulations for the conduct of the same in the war then to be waged against Almagreb and Magaraba, the people of those parts having been incited to opposition of his power by the Beni Yaterian and other Cabilas of Barbary. The remainder of his force he led in person, and in a short time he brought the whole land of Almagreb to his obedience, subjecting tribe after tribe, and province after province, with little difficulty and no resistance on the part of the dwellers therein. Nearly all the Cabilas came readily to proffer their allegiance, and entering Medina Agmat, Juzef Ben Taxfin there solemnized his nuptials with the beautiful Zainab, whom he took from his brother Abu Bekir Ben Omar, because he loved her tenderly and perceived that he was equally beloved.*

We find it related of Juzef Ben Taxfin that he once bought a large number of slaves, natives of Guinea, who were sold to him by certain merchants carrying on traffic with the people of Guinea in a city called Gasza, which lies deep in the centre of the deserts. It is furthermore said that these slaves had in old times been Christians, but that in their intercourse with the men of Barbary, whether from the evils and violence of war, or from some other cause is not known, they had gradually lost their religion. For the furtherance of his plans and the execution of certain purposes which he entertained, Juzef now sent these black slaves to the coasts of Andalusia, where he caused them to be exchanged against a large number of captive Christian boys whom he received from the people of Andalusia. The youths thus acquired he then caused to be instructed in the

* The naïveté with which this notable wrong, committed by a man declared to be perfect, is related by the old Arabian writers, without the slightest intimation of disapproval, is not a little curious, and loses much in translation.—Tr.

Law, and at the proper time he gave them arms, having likewise had them carefully instructed in warlike exercises, and rendered accomplished horsemen; when he raised them to the dignity of knighthood. Thenceforward Juzef Ben Taxfin kept two hundred and fifty of their number constantly about his person, but selecting those thus distinguished very carefully; he accepted only such as displayed the most remarkable dexterity in the management of their horses, and the use of their arms. He likewise formed a troop of negro youths, chosen from the most promising of the slaves purchased as above mentioned, to whom he gave arms and horses, and of these also he kept a body of two thousand horsemen always about him, choosing in like manner those only who were remarkable for their dexterity in arms as well as for their bravery.

On the Jews of his states, who were numerous and rich, Juzef Ben Taxfin laid a very heavy tribute, and thereby amassed large sums of money, which aided him to extend his power. The Tribes and Cabilas acknowledging his rule were at length so numerous that, in the year 454, he was able to assemble a powerful host, and at that time he sounded his trumpets, raised his banners, and having passed his forces in review, it was found that he had no less than one hundred thousand cavaliers, all men of admirable qualities for war; they were chiefly from the tribes of Zanhaga, Gezula, Musamada, and Zeneta, with those of the Albazases and Arramates, who were equally brave and hardy.

With this army he departed from Morocco, and directed his march towards Fez, when there came to his encounter the Cabilas of that land, from Zuaga, Lamait, Lunait, Sadina, Sedrana, Maguila, Behlula, and Mediona, with other tribes from many other places, all presenting themselves to the battle with extraordinary resolution. The conflict which then ensued was a very obstinate and sanguinary one, but those Cabilas were defeated by Juzef Ben Taxfin, who routed them with horrible slaughter, and all finally fled. They then took refuge for the most part among the fortresses or within the walls of Medina Mediona, but the Almoravides forced their way into that city sword in hand. The troops sacked and plundered the place, in which they put to death four thousand men, and having seized the Walies, the conquering

army next proceeded to Medina Fez, where their leader, Juzef Ben Taxfin, remained until he had subjugated and brought to his obedience all the tribes who made their abode on those confines.

The Ameer Abu Bekir, cousin of Juzef Ben Taxfin, had meanwhile taken vengeance on the tribe of Gudala, and had put an end to the misunderstandings which he had found prevailing among his kindred and allies of Lamtuna. These things done, he returned to Mauritania in the year 465, and approaching Agmat he had not yet entered the city before he was informed of the mighty power and aggrandizement of his cousin Juzef Ben Taxfin, with the proud thoughts entertained by that ruler, and how he had gained the hearts of all the people. The Ameer Abu Bekir was furthermore made aware of the manner in which Juzef had fortified the country, and that he had strengthened himself in such sort as clearly to make manifest the truth that he desired to have no companion in the empire.

It happened, moreover, that certain cavaliers, who had gone from the camp of Abu Bekir to see the city of Morocco and to mark the progress of the buildings, had returned full of admiration at the manner in which Juzef Ben Taxfin had made all his arrangements, and of astonishment at the marks of prudent foresight, as well as of vast power, which they had everywhere perceived. They had also heard wondrous things related of the manner in which Juzef proceeded with his warriors, of the great liberality he displayed towards them, and the rich gifts of horses, arms, costly vestments, and slaves, which he frequently made them, with the promises and hopes of reward held out to all who entered his service. These discourses, describing these things, rang through the camp; and the hearers of these relations, as well as their narrators, praised all the splendid qualities thus attributed to Juzef Ben Taxfin, whom they exalted to the skies.

Hearing all this, Abu Bekir became convinced that the ambitious determination of his cousin to retain the sovereignty in his own hands was irrevocable. But, although he had thus lost all hope of reigning as he had previously done in those states, he yet concealed his indignation, and wrote letters to Juzef, appointing a time for their

meeting, without expressing any part of the anger which he felt.

The day fixed on having arrived, Juzef Ben Taxfin came forth, surrounded by his large household and a vast crowd of slaves, with an army of no inconsiderable strength as his escort. He met his cousin in the road-way between Agmat and Morocco, each having come about four miles and a half, since the distance between the two places is nine miles. Abu Bekir and Juzef were both on horseback, and the former saluted his cousin with a courtesy which he rarely extended to any man. They then both alighted, and took their seats on an Albornoze or wide mantle of woollen stuff, which had been extended for that purpose; from which circumstance the group of trees where this meeting took place was thenceforth called "the Grove of the Albornoze."

Abu Bekir was greatly amazed at the majesty and regal grandeur exhibited by Juzef Ben Taxfin, not only in the number of his cavaliers, the order of his squadrons, and the division of his tents, but also in his person and the expression of his countenance. At the close of the conversation which took place between them, Abu Bekir uttered the following words, but with a dissembling mind:—"Oh, my brother Juzef—for as such I hold thee, since thou art the son of my own uncle, and our kindred is of so close a tie—here do I find none who is able to maintain the empire of Almagreb as thou canst do; nay, there cannot be any who so well merits to be lord over all as thyself, since to no one can that supremacy belong of better right. It is true that I cannot myself remain here—I must return to the desert and dwell therein; nor hath my present coming any other end than that of declaring to thee my resolution in that matter, and of announcing my will that thou shouldst be lord and master of these States; that done, I repair to the desert, which is the proper dwelling of our brethren and forefathers."

To these words Juzef Ben Taxfin replied with much humility, and gave his cousin thanks. The two sovereigns then called to their presence the nobles of Lantuna and great personages of the kingdom, with the Walies and Xequés of the Masamudas, with whom were also admitted

the Alchatibes and Xuhudes*, accompanied by a certain number of the people, in whose presence writings were prepared attesting the cession thus made by Abu Bekir, and his voluntary renunciation of the States of Morocco, with all the remaining portions of Almagreb, in favour of his cousin Juzef Ben Taxfin. That done, all rose, and the witnesses were dismissed, yet not without secret pain and regret on the part of Abu Bekir, whose apparent satisfaction in the arrangement was but feigned, and assembling his attendants, he returned with a grieving heart to his pavilion, which had been established at Agmat.

Juzef Ben Taxfin also departed, taking the way to Morocco, with his army and many followers. Arrived at his abode, he prepared a rich and distinguished present for his cousin; and among other costly rarities, that gift contained the objects hereafter enumerated: first were one hundred and twenty thousand gold doubloons made of the finest metal that could be procured, next came seventy horses of the most noble race, twenty-five of this number being covered with magnificent caparisons and harness, of which the borderings and decorations were of beaten gold; to these were added seventy swords, twenty of which had the handles in gold of the finest workmanship, while of the remainder the handles were of silver, also richly chased; one hundred and fifty carefully-chosen beasts of burden; one hundred costly turbans, with four hundred more of the manufacture of Sûs; one hundred vestments bordered with the finest lamb-skins; two hundred white mantles with borders of different colours; one thousand pieces of fine linen for head-dresses, and two hundred pieces of the finest quality known; seven hundred cloaks for outer wear, partly white and partly in colours, being such as are used by the tribe of Lamtuna; two hundred and fifty vestments of scarlet, and seventy mantles of a thick, and yet very fine, stuff, to preserve the wearer from the rain: to all this were added twenty female slaves, all white and of extraordinary beauty, with one hundred and fifty slave-girls, of black complexion, but of choice and comely form; ten pounds of aromatic woods from the

* Xuhudes: men learned in the law.

Indies, all of the sweetest and most fragrant odour; five packets of the finest Amizcle or musk; two pounds of amber; fifteen pounds of camphor and algalia, or the perfume of the civet: a large herd of cows, and one of sheep, were also in that princely gift, with many loads of wheat and barley.

Abu Bekir is said to have been gratified by the rich present, but instantly distributed the whole among the cavaliers of his train. He then withdrew to the desert, according to some writers, and engaging in a war with the Negro tribes, lost his life in that contest, at the end of three years from the time here in question. These writers add that his cousin Juzef Ben Taxfin paid him the attention of yearly sending him a gift of equal value with the one described above, until the time of his death. But there are other authorities who relate the close of this affair in a different manner, and they tell us that Abu Bekir repented him of his abdication, and attempting to depose Juzef, was conquered by that prince, who took possession of his city and caused him to be put to death. They add, that his army then retreated to Medina Safar, where they maintained themselves for some time; but Juzef finally storming the place, then beheaded the chiefs of the council, who were the sons of Mesaud El Megaravi, and had made themselves masters of the city and its Comarcas. These things accomplished, Juzef Ben Taxfin is then declared to have directed his march upon Fez, which offered so effectual a resistance, that he had held the place closely besieged for an entire year before he could force an entrance, which he finally succeeded in obtaining in the year 455, when he appointed a Wali of the tribe of Lamtuna to govern the city in his name.

All being tranquilly arranged in that quarter, Juzef Ben Taxfin next proceeded to Velad Gomara, where the Wali had risen in rebellion. This Wali was Mansur Ben Hemad, who attempted to hold the town as those of Fez had done; but Juzef took it by storm, when he immediately commanded that Mansur and his partizans should be put to death.

In the same year 455, the Amecri Almahedi Ben Juzef El Cazneti was proclaimed lord of Velad Mekinesa, but at once resigned himself to the obedience of Juzef Ben Taxfin, who

treated him with infinite generosity, confirming him in his lordship, and requiring only that he should serve with a certain number of troops in the war which Juzef Ben Taxfin had then undertaken against Velad Almagreb and the tribes of the neighbouring Comarcas.

In pursuance of that agreement, the Ameer Almahedi Ben Juzef prepared his people, and went forth, as directed by Juzef Ben Taxfin, against Medina Auxa: but when this became known to the Magaravi leader, even Temim, son of Mansur, the rebel chief of the city of Fez, he became alarmed at the great increase of power constantly accruing to Juzef Ben Taxfin and the Almoravides, and fearing for his own life, he assembled the forces of Magarava, with those of the Zenete Cabilas, all which he led forth to the encounter of the Ameer Almahedi.

The hosts met accordingly, and were soon engaged in a sanguinary and obstinate battle, wherein Almahedi Ben Juzef was defeated and lost his life, dying with sword in hand, after fighting with the bravery of a lion: his troops were then totally routed and dispersed; which done, Temim Ben Mansur cut off the head of Almahedi and sent it to El Barqueti, the lord of Cepta, who was his father-in-law.

The defeat and death of their Ameer caused great sorrow to the people of Mekinesa, who made their misfortunes known to the King Juzef Ben Taxfin, offering him at the same time the dominion of their country, and inviting him to become their sovereign. The proposal was accepted by that ruler, who immediately despatched a force against the Magaravi Temim Ben Mansur, lord of Fez, making incursions on his territories, cutting up his fields, and harassing his subjects with perpetual inroads.

But after a certain time, the lord of Fez perceived that his people were becoming weary of the continued attacks to which they were subjected, and of the privations which were the result. He found the discontent of his subjects increase as the numbers they lost in the various skirmishes became more and more considerable: they suffered also from the want of water; and their chief determined to make a great effort for their release. Gathering whatever force he could muster from Magarava and Beni Yafarin, he thereupon sallied forth, with a considerable host, to try his fortune

once more against the rising star of the Almoravides: the battle commenced accordingly, and soon became one of horrible carnage, wherein the leader, Temim Ben Manser, and the greater part of his people, died fighting bravely, as good men should do.

Temim Ben Manser having fallen, his place was taken by Alcasem Ben Muhamad Ben Abderahman Ben Ibrahim Ben Muza Ben Abi Alafia, El Zenete, who assumed the command of the troops and the government of Fez without delay. A second battle was then fought on the shores of the Guadisiſir; and in that encounter, which was a truly terrible one, the Almoravides were totally defeated, the loss being very great on both sides, more especially among the cavalry.

The news of this disaster were quickly borne to Juzef Ben Taxfin, who was then occupied with the siege of Ilisn Mahedi;* but he at once abandoned his attack on that fortress to the care of certain among his generals, to whom he left a body of the Almoravides to continue the same. That siege was a wonderfully long one, nine years having elapsed before the Almoravide forces entered the place, which they did by conditions of surrender in the year 465.

Juzef himself departed, as we have said, and first repaired to Beni Morasan, the Wali of which place had rebelled, and was then with his people in full insurrection. He resisted for some time; but Juzef finally defeated him, killed many of his partizans, and succeeded in tranquillizing the district. The king then proceeded to Fendelewa, and conquered all that country: this was in the year 456; and Juzef Ben Taxfin, next passing to Velad Barga, entered that city in the year 458.

In the year 460, the same sovereign made the conquest of Velad Gomara, from Araif to Tangiers; and in the year 462 he directed his march on Medina Fez, before which city he sat down with his whole army. The siege was then continued with great energy, and having finally entered the place sword in hand, King Juzef slew all the people of Magaraba whom he found therein, with those of Mekineza, Beni Yahfaran, and the Cabilas of Zeneta, not sparing a single

* The fortress of Magredi.

life, insomuch that an infinite multitude perished in Medina Fez, the streets and squares of the place being filled with the corpses of the slain. The king likewise put to death more than three thousand men of the Comarcas neighbouring to Fez, with many more from Cairvan, and not a few Andalusians, who were also among the defenders. Those who had taken flight at an earlier period of the carnage were more fortunate, and made good their escape, directing their steps to the confines of Teliman.

This was the second great conquest of Juzef Ben Taxfin, whose solemn entrance into the city of Fez took place on Thursday, the 2nd day of Giumada Segunda, in the year 462. He had no sooner obtained possession of the place than he commanded that it should be fortified, and caused the wall to be cast down, by which the Barrio or quarter of the Andalusians had originally been separated from that occupied by the people of Cairvan, as hath been heretofore described, thereby reducing the two Barrios to one large quarter or district. He also caused mosques to be constructed in every division of the town; and if in any great street or square there was found to be no mosque, he compelled the inhabitants of the district to build one. Juzef Ben Taxfin likewise erected or restored the Aljamas, and built exchanges for the merchants, with great Caravanserais for the same, and markets for the convenience of all men remaining in Fez to see that all these labours were duly proceeded with, until the moon of Safer, in the year 463, when he departed and repaired to Velad Muluva, where he took possession of the fortress called Felat. In the year 464, the conquering monarch was engaged in extensive preparations with the firm resolve to subjugate the remaining parts of Almagreb by force of arms; but the Xeques of the Zeneta tribe, with those of Masamuda, Gomara, and other Cabilas of Barbary, came to submit themselves without further contest, proclaiming Juzef Ben Taxfin their lord. ...

CHAP. XI.—OF THE MANNER IN WHICH THE ALMORAVIDE JUZEF BEN TAXFIN CONTINUED HIS CONQUESTS.

By their submission, as above mentioned, the tribes obtained their pardon from the victorious sovereign, and he left them in the possession of their lands. He now passed through all his dominions in Almagreb, accompanied by a large body of troops, enquiring into the condition of the people in every part, and taking such measures as he found needful for ensuring the good government of all: nay, to effect this last-mentioned object ever appeared to Juzef Ben Taxfin the most important of his undertakings, and the first duty of a prince.

In the year 465, Juzef obtained possession of the city of Aldanah in Velad Tangier, which he took by force of arms and entered by storm. He also occupied Mount Aloudaun, which he took in like manner at this time. In the year 467, the king made himself master of Gebal Gioza, Beni Macoud, and Beni Rahina, where he put to death much people. The lands of Almagreb were by his command divided into provinces during the course of the same year.

In the moon of Dylhagia, also of the year 467, the star Almekak made its appearance in Almagreb, and was likewise seen in the country of Spain.

Now Juzef Ben Taxfin gave the government of Velad Almagreb to Ycezed Ben Abi Bekir; that of Mudain Mekineza, Velad Meklala, and Velad Fezaun, he gave to Onar Ben Zuleiman; Medina Fez and its Comarcas he bestowed on Davoud Ben Aixa; and Sigilmesa, with Daraa, he entrusted to his own son Temim, on whom he furthermore conferred the government of Medina Agmat, Morocco, Velad Asous, a part of Velad Masamuda, and Velad Temizana.

It was at this time that the King of Seville, even Muhamad Aben Abed Almutamed, having been made acquainted with the vast power exercised by Juzef Ben Taxfin in Africa, and with the victories obtained by that monarch, desired to secure his friendship; and this he did the more earnestly because it appeared to him that if he could prevail on the African prince to occupy the arms of Muhamad Barqueti of Cebta, and those of the rulers in the

district of Tangiers, he should himself be thereby enabled to complete his conquests in Andalusia with the greater facility. He therefore wrote letters to Juzef Ben Taxfin, requesting his alliance, and exhorting the African sovereign to aid him with his power in the defence of Islam; but King Juzef replied, that he could not pass into Spain until he had made himself master of Cepta and Tangiers; wherefore, as it was precisely the object of Aben Abed that Juzef Ben Taxfin should make war on the lords of those cities and their Comarcas, he wrote again to offer assistance in that war, promising to attack Muhamad El Barqueti from the coast, provided Juzef could come against them from the desert, and so take care that the rulers of Cepta and Tangiers should be effectually surrounded.

All this was then accomplished as designed, the people of Aben Abed, King of Seville, putting to sea as he had proposed, and assisting Juzef Ben Taxfin to occupy the cities of Cepta and Tangiers, which he did in the year 470.

Now for this war of Cepta and Tangiers, Juzef Ben Taxfin had summoned to his aid the forces of Jaleh Ben Amran, who appeared with twelve thousand well-selected horsemen of the Almoravides, reinforced by twenty thousand men from the tribes of Almagreb and Zeneta. When these troops arrived on the borders of Tangiers, there went forth to their encounter the Hagib, Socra El Barqueti, with such strength as he could make. That general was now of great age, he had lived more than one hundred years, yet he bravely exclaimed, "By Allah! while I am in life, the trumpets of the Almoravides must not be heard in Cepta."

The two armies met in battle on the banks of the Guadimena, when the conflict, which was a very sanguinary one, was maintained with a superhuman valour on both sides; but the brave old Socra died with his sword in his hand, when his troops fell into disorder, and fled routed from the field. The Almoravides then continued their march towards Tangiers, which they took, but the Hagib Dhialdola Yahye, son of the noble Socra, still remained in Cepta. The victory obtained in the Guadimena by the troops of Saleh Ben Amran was duly made known to Juzef Ben Taxfin, to whom that intelligence was highly acceptable.

In the year 472, Juzef sent his general Mezdeli to make

the conquest of Medina Telinzan, and that commander repaired to the city above-named accordingly with twenty thousand Almoravide troops. They took the place with but little delay, defeating and slaying the Ameer of Telinzan, even Yala Ben Yala. That done, Mezdeli returned to Morocco, where the King Juzef then was, and into which city the successful general entered with his victorious army in the year 473.

In that year the impress stamped on the coined money was changed; Juzef Ben Taxfin then inscribing his own name thereon. The same year beheld the conquests of the cities of Agersif and Melila, with that of the whole territory of Araif; Medina Tekrur was also taken at this time, when the walls were razed and the city destroyed; nor was it ever again rebuilt.

At the commencement of the year 474, the city of Wahida rebelled against the power of Juzef Ben Taxfin; but it was taken by storm. In this year the king likewise subjugated the lands and tribes of Beni Barnetin, when he beheaded the Xeques who had been the leaders of the conquered Cabilas. He then proceeded against Telidzan, which he took for the second time. That conquest was followed by those of Medina Tunis and Medina Wahran, with that of Gebal Guacasris and all the east country, even to Gezair. After this the King Juzef Ben Taxfin returned to Morocco, which city he entered in the moon of Rebie Segunda, of the year 475.*

In the same year, Juzef once more received letters from Ahnutamed Aben Abed, King of Seville, wherein that sovereign entreated his assistance, and sought to obtain his friendship; when Juzef promised to pass into Spain so soon as he had freed his hands from the war of Cebta, with which they were then occupied.

It was at this time that Alfonso Ben Ferdeland,† King of the Christians, directed his march against Andalusia, into which country he poured an immense host of warriors gathered from the Infidel bands of Afrane (which is France)

* A.D. 1082: or, as other computators have it, 1085.

† Ferdinand; whom the Arabic authors call indifferently Ferdiland, Ferdeland, and Ferdanun.

their troops having joined those of Galelikia* and Castille, as had also the banners of the Albakenses, who are the dwellers at the foot of those mountains which separate Spain from the land of Afranc. With these forces Alfonso took his way towards Saragossa, burning the towns through which he passed, cutting up the cultivated fields, and putting the inhabitants of all to the edge of the sword. The people fled before his troops in terror, and on every side there arose the wail of death and desolation, seeing that Alfonso Ben Ferdiland spared the life of none but those who were unable to oppose him. The brave King of Saragossa was unable to resist this torrent; and all Spain now beheld itself inundated by the furious bands of the Infidel, who were led on by merciless tyrants, cruelly oppressing the unhappy Moslemah of every province in the land.

When the Ameers of Spain beheld that spectacle, they were at length compelled to open their eyes to the true state of things, and they perceived but too clearly that Alfonso Ben Ferdiland would quickly find means to accomplish all his designs, unless they on their parts could oppose some more effectual resistance to his forces than they had hitherto been able to bring against them.

We have already related the fact that Abul Walid Albage, Cadi of Cordova and Governor of that city for Aben Abed King of Seville, had invited all the Ameers to send their Alimes, Alfakees, and Cadies, from the various Aljamas of Spain to a council to be held in the capital of Aben Abed; these ambassadors assembling accordingly in the city of Seville, whither they had been convoked by the Cadi of Cordova aforesaid, in concert with his master, Aben Abed the king.

The danger of universal ruin with which they were threatened was then discussed between the grave men forming that conference, when all were of opinion that letters should be written to every Ameer of Spain, exhorting all to the common defence of the country against the Christians, and calling upon every ruler to instruct the Walies and Alcades of the cities and fortress on the frontiers, to the

* Gallicia.

same effect. All replied immediately, declaring with one accord that a Sacred War must instantly be published among the faithful as undertaken against Alfonso Ben Ferdiland; but at the same time these Ameers of Spain had so little confidence in the efficiency of their own resources, that they likewise agreed to send messengers to the Prince of the Almoravides, even Juzef Ben Taxfin, entreating him to pass over into Spain with a strong body of troops for the purpose of joining with them in the Alghed or Holy War about to commence.

All were of accord as to the necessity for this step, with the sole exception of Abdallah Ben Zagut, governor of Malaga for Aben Abed, King of Seville, and that Wali opposed the same with the utmost constancy, declaring that it was not expedient to bring the Almoravide Moslemah into Spain, they being a people accustomed only to the sandy wastes and deserts of Africa; he added, that to invite them into the land would be equivalent to the admission therein of the fiercest lions and tigers produced by those regions; that he could not give his trust to those African Moslemah, and that if their King Juzef Ben Taxfin did succeed in breaking the chains which Alfonso Ben Ferdiland was fastening around them, yet it was much to be feared that the conqueror would then lay others upon them, which they might find yet more weighty, and more difficult of removal. Abdallah Ben Zagut then exhorted the assembled counsellors to consider in how short a time Juzef Ben Taxfin had subjugated the cities of Almagreb and deprived of their liberty the numerous tribes of those regions, with all the most powerful Cabilas of Alkibla* and Sus Alaksa. He declared that the most advisable step to be then taken was, for the Spanish sovereigns to form a true and sincere union among themselves, and forgetting the discords which had been the one great cause of the ruin by which they were menaced, join all their forces in a well-sustained contest with Alphonso Ben Ferdiland; which, if they would do, renouncing all particular interests, and thinking only of the common weal, it was certain that they would prove superior to the Christians who were assailing them; nay, would cer-

* Alkibla, or Alquibla: the South.

tainly be invincible, provided only that every Ameer would sincerely support and assist all the others. In conclusion, the wise and upright Abdallah reminded his hearers of those contentions which had caused their present woes, affirming that they all well knew the strife they had occasioned to have brought on the decadence of the Mosleman power, and imploring them to let that knowledge now have its due weight in their counsels.

But this prudent discourse was heard with ill-will, and met with complete disapprobation. Abdallah Ben Zagut was accused of being in confederacy with Alfonso Ben Ferdiland; the Alimes and Alfakirs declaring him to be a bad Mosleman and an enemy of the law. They accordingly excommunicated the noble defender of the truth, and pronounced him to be worthy of death.

The letter of the Ameers was then sent to Juzef Ben Taxfin without further opposition, Aben Abed affixing his seal to it for Seville, Badis or Habus Ben Balkin for Granada, Omar Ben Alaftas for Badaljos, Yahye Almenoun Ben Ismail Ben Dyloun for Valencia, Moez-Daula for Almeria, Aben Zeidun, the Wali of Tadmir, for that city, with its Comarcas, and Aben Tahir, with other Walies, for the remaining provinces. The letter was signed, at a word, by thirteen Ameers, all joining to entreat with earnest prayers that Juzef Ben Taxfin would be pleased to pass into Spain and liberate them by his power from the proud enemy by whom they were oppressed. The letter furthermore set forth the condition of the country, whose cities it described as burnt and destroyed, while the fields were cut up, and the fortresses occupied by the Christian foe. The latter was furthermore declared to be constantly carrying off the flower of the Mosleman youth into a hard captivity before the eyes of the writers. These words were affirmed to be the supplication of all the followers of the Koran, and Juzef Ben Taxfin was implored to give ear to the lamentations of so many unfortunate creatures, and proceed with his conquering hosts, favoured of Allah, to redeem their lives, since in his generosity alone could they hope to find a certain refuge.

Now Juzef Ben Taxfin was at Medina Fez when this letter was laid before him, and he had there received intelli-

gence from his son Cilman but a short time previously, to the effect that the latter had taken Cefta, which city he had entered as a conqueror in the moon of Rebie Primera, of the year 477.

These news rejoiced King Juzef greatly, and for that reason he received the supplication of the Spanish Amceers with the greater pleasure. He determined in his own mind to pass the sea and enter Spain from Cefta, after he had visited that conquest; but since he was now perfectly tranquil and at peace in his own States, he desired first to take time for the renewal and increase of his armies, and for the due arrangement of other affairs relating to the household of his palace and the officials of his court.

In these dispositions Juzef Ben Taxfin was in no haste to reply to the Amceers of Spain; wherefore, though resolved to enter ultimately on the Algihed or Holy War, he determined to select the moment which might best suit him for doing so: he first wrote letters and sent ambassadors into the Desert to the various Cabilas of Lantuna, Musafa, Gudala, and others, making known to them how God had enriched him with new kingdoms in the different parts of Almagreb, and how the natives of those lands were obeying and serving him with much good will. He described to those African Cabilas the excellence and abundant fertility of the country, entreating them very warmly to repair to his palace and sovereignty, where he desired to receive them as his friends, and bestow rewards upon the chief among them, as upon his own kindred and the members of his family, proposing to render them all rich and powerful. He added, that to this effect he was reserving for them the most honourable employments about his court, in the provinces of his empire, and in its various cities, with distinguished commands in his armies, to the end that they, being as they were of his own people, might aid him to govern the states which God had confided to his rule.

By this generous invitation vast numbers were attracted to the enjoyment of the advantages proposed to them in terms so flattering, insomuch that no long time had elapsed before whole troops from every tribe of the Desert came flocking to the court of Juzef Ben Taxfin, who received them with all the favour he had given them the right to

expect, conferring on the more distinguished of their number the most honourable charges, and rendering all content, because he employed each man according to the degree of his learning, his worth, and the nobility of his lineage. The king distributed these new comers into the various provinces and cities of his dominions as he had promised them that he would do, in such sort that the lands of Almagreb, half depopulated by the conflicts described, were soon filled by inhabitants who had come from the Cabilas of Lamtuna and other tribes of the Desert.

This, then, was the most prosperous and happy epoch of the Almoravides; the armies of the King Juzef Ben Taxfin increased to a vast extent; the extent of his power and greatness prevailed mightily, and the fame of these was bruited abroad, not in Africa only, but in Spain also; nay, even in the lands lying beyond that country. It thus happened that on the occasion of his having completed the conquests of the kingdoms of Fez, Telinzan, Mekineza, and other states, previously ruled by the Zeneta Ameers, his Xeques and Walies, with the governors of his provinces, and the nobles of his court, came around him in a body, when, being thus congregated, they spake to the following effect, and said,—That although his moderation had hitherto contented itself with the title of Ameer only, yet they now entreated him to change that appellation for the more august one of a Caliph in the Lands of the West, with such other distinguished and honourable titles as were suitable to his great power: they enforced this request by the remark that the name of Ameer, once used exclusively by the Caliphs, had now become a title common to many princes and lords of but slight importance, both in Africa and Spain; wherefore they entreated him very humbly that for the future he would permit them to consider him as the Ameer Amuminin, or supreme ruler and sovereign of the Faithful.

To this Juzef Ben Taxfin replied by the declaration that he would not assume the title they proposed, since his doing so could not be otherwise than displeasing to God, the august appellation they recommended belonging to the Caliphs of the East alone, seeing that these last were the illus-

trious descendants of the Prophet and of the Lords of both the Holy Houses,* whereas he was himself nothing more than a man who gloried in being the follower of the religion of the great Princes and Caliphs of the East.

His Xequcs then requested that he would at least permit them to honour him with some title by which he might be known from the other Ameers, and which was his manifest due, since he had of a truth distinguished and raised himself above all the rest by the glory of his exploits. It was then agreed by those present that he should be called Ameer Almuzlimin, or Lord of the Moslemah, to which was subsequently added Nasaradin; and to the end that these titles should be known to all, they were published in the Almimbaires and at the Azala of every Juna.

The Xequcs and Nobles then assembled decided at the same time on the formularies to be employed in the declarations, petitions, and other papers thenceforward to be addressed to the sovereign, and the decree arranging these matters was conceived in the following terms:—

“In the name of God, the Generous, the Merciful !”

“We, the Ameer Almuzlimin Nasaradin Juzef Aben Taxfin, to all the great men and nobles of our kingdoms and states, and to all the tribes whom God in his goodness has been pleased to continue in his holy fear, and guide according to his pleasure. Salutation in the highest prosperity, with the mercy and blessing of God, be with you !

“After thanks offered to God, to whom, as the Giver of every source of victory, all praises are due, we have sent you this letter, written and made known in this our Court of Medina Morocco—which may God preserve!—in the middle of the moon of Muharram, in the year 478; and that which it contains is as follows:—

“Since God has bestowed upon us the mercy of many great victories, very glorious and renowned, and hath enriched us with abundant and manifold favours, as it were with a dew of benefits, at the same time confirming us in the true path of the Law which hath been laid before us by our Prophet, the Liberal, the Selected, we have permitted

* Medina and Mecca.

that ye, when ye speak or write to us, in your letters of supplication, shall call us by that title above expressed, namely, King of the Faithful, and Protector or Defender of the Faith, hereby distinguishing us from the rest of the kings who govern the cabilas or tribes of Africa and of other regions.

“And furthermore we have determined and allowed, that whoever shall speak to us, or demand anything at our hands by writing, shall require it from our high and royal person under the title and name above written. If so it shall please God, who is in truth the Lord of Protection by His liberality. We greet you well.”

CHAP. XII.—OF THE ALLIANCE FORMED BY THE MOSLEMAH OF SPAIN AND JUZEF BEN TAXFIN, AMEER OF THE FAITHFUL, AGAINST ALFONSO BEN FERDILAND, KING OF THE CHRISTIANS; OF THE CONQUESTS OF THE LATTER, AND OF HOW, HAVING TAKEN TOLEDO, HE WRITES TO ABEN ABED, KING OF SEVILLE.

KING Juzef Ben Taxfin dismissed the ambassadors of Andalusia highly satisfied with their reception, he having promised to send them aid that should deliver them from the wrongs and oppressions they were suffering, as well as from the perils which were threatening them, and from the strait of which they complained. And these evils were in fact daily becoming more grievous in Spain, seeing that Alfonso Ben Ferdiland was pouring the thunders of his wrath upon the country, and casting the lightnings of desolation over all that owned the Moslemah name. He now seemed to aspire to nothing less than the deprivation of every Amcer in Spain of his lordships, and the rendering all the princes of that country mere tributaries to himself. He treated such as held intercourse with him with great arrogance and haughtiness, as is manifest from the letters which were written to him by King Omar Ben Alaftas, lord of Algarve.

That Amcer was his nearest neighbour, since his lands lay on the frontiers of Gallicia, and he was exposed more than any other of the Moslemah princes to the menaces

of that enemy of Allah, Alfonso Ben Ferdiland. In these letters he complains accordingly of the pride and ambition displayed by Alfonso, and of the purpose of that Christian to render all around him his vassals, and tributary to his power; Alfonso presuming it to be no difficult task to subjugate a district lying so closely upon the borders of his own kingdom. In the terms here following it was, then, that Omar Ben Alaftas replied to the arrogant demands and menaces of Alfonso Ben Ferdiland:—

“Omar Ben Alaftas Almudafar, King of Algarve, to Alfonso, the King of Galicia:—

“From the powerful King of the Christians there hath come to our hands a letter, wherein he, full of presumption, and of confidence in that greatness which the incomprehensible judgments of God have accorded to him, casteth thunders and lightnings against us, whom he menaceth, without any reason given, with the whole might of his hosts, the terrors of his vast power, and the victory of his arms.

“But Alfonso Ben Ferdiland doth not seem to know or understand that God also still possesses armies wherewith he honours and makes triumphant the truth of His Law and the doctrine of our Prophet Muhamad, favouring and assisting those Moslemah who make just war against the Christians, or who follow the path which God hath laid open to them without signs of fear, knowing and fearing God, and showing marks of contrition for their sins. These things the King Alfonso doth not know or understand, or he would not write as he hath written. For if the face of the Christian now shines and is resplendent, that is by the permission of God, and to the end that the Faithful may be made aware of their late blindness, and may open their eyes to the light: thus distinguishing the good from the evil, God hath also permitted these things that even the Misbelievers may receive a lesson and a warning.

“With respect to the contempt and mockery wherewith the Christian King hath loaded the Moslemah, because of the defeat that they have suffered and the evils they endure, let him know that we, the Moslemah so reproached, understand these things to have been caused by our sins, and by the misunderstandings and discords which have arisen among

ourselves, destroying the unity [that should exist in our nation. Yes, of a truth, if we do but become one, and associate ourselves into a firm band, then shall we make you, Oh King Alfonso—you and your Christians—again confess that we still know how to prepare those dainty morsels which our forefathers of other times have made your ancestors taste to their sorrow. Know, therefore, that we have not lost hope in God, and that with His help we shall not desist from believing that there is prepared for thee, Alfonso, the most bitter cup that ever thou hast yet known, or even heard of, but which we shall make thee drink, yea, down to the dregs thereof.

“Meanwhile, and awaiting that day, do thou remember the times of Muhamad Almanzor, and bring to thy memory those treaties wherein thy forefathers offered him the homage even of their own daughters, and sent him those damsels in tribute, even to the land of our rule. As to ourselves, if it be true that our numbers have diminished, and that there is none to aid us, yet between thee and us there flows no sea, nor is there any other impediment to separate us one from the other; nay, rather we have still battle-grounds for our conflict, as thou shalt know, when the edges of our swords, reflecting the breasts of thy people, shall dazzle thine eyes with their pure and resplendent lustre, so that thou shalt be able to see only the fearful glancing of our arms.

“My confidence is in God: in Him, and in His angels appearing under human forms, do I hope to find protection from thy power. We expect help from God only; nor is there any other shelter open to us save of God alone, in whom is our sole refuge: at a word, we are looking only for one of two felicities; either a glorious victory over thy people—and Oh, the rapturous delight of that felicity—or a death that shall be still more welcome and glorious in the path and service of our God. And this! Oh, what a happiness, what a heaven of delights doth it not offer to us! for in that Paradise shall God confer on us the great reward and indemnification for all thy menaces and the result of our honourable death. But it will not be thus, and before that time shall come we shall yet receive a victory from the hands of God that shall redeem and deliver us from all our past sufferings: and may God the Highest give to thee, Oh

King Alfonso, the same miseries with which thou hast threatened us!

But with all this appearance of trust and fearlessness, King Omar Ben Alaftas, although a brave and noble captain, felt assured that his forces were not of strength to resist the power of Alfonso, and reflecting that the near neighbourhood of his lands to those of the Christian king would give the latter an opportunity for entering them, as he had just done those of Toledo, he wrote a pressing letter to King Juzef Aben Taxfin, begging that monarch not to delay his arrival in Spain, where his aid was much required to repress the advances of the Christians, who were contending against the Moslemah with continued prosperity: the letter to Jusef was written by his own hand, and was as follows:—

“ From Ben Alaftas, the Confident in God, to Juzef Ben Taxfin, King of the Moslemah:—

“ As the light and splendour of the good guiding star, so be that, O King of the Moslemah, whom may God defend and prosper! which leads, directs, and moves thy steps. Thou who hast chosen for thy path the way of beneficence and wisdom, hast occupied thyself continually for the good of others, and hast turned all thy desires to the making of war on the misbelievers.

“ Of all this we have been constantly well informed, and being assured that thou hast dedicated thyself to the honour, exaltation, and defence of our Law, we think it well to have recourse to thee, who art the most powerful conqueror of the infidels, and the most illustrious captain, as well as the greatest emperor of our faith. We therefore implore thy assistance and the aid of thy troops to succour and defend our religion and ourselves.

“ And the pressure of our misfortunes is indeed extreme; tribulations and calamities surround us on every part of Spain, while there are evils so much greater still menacing the land, that we cannot even think of them without terror. This accursed race of infidels is surrounding us on every side, and hath continued to do so from the time when our people began to neglect the subjugation of their hordes, and above all, since we have ceased to live in amity and union among ourselves. These our enemies have thus

become great and formidable; they have extended their wings, and having ever hated us, these dogs, now finding their power increased, have given way to their inimical fury, and taking us at a defenceless moment, have infused into us a panic which keepeth us with the head ever turned on the shoulder,* leaving us not power of helping ourselves, if it be not with perfidious treaties which bring no relief, and with plausible words of pretended submission, which give no comfort to our hearts, but rather keep us in perpetual care and the dread of what may next chance to us.

“Nor do the fears we suffer decrease because we daily send these infidels rich and precious gifts, permitting them, moreover, to drain every kind of provisions and muniments from our lands. All these sacrifices do not calm our terrors, nor diminish our perils; yet if the injuries we suffer did not go beyond this, we might endure them cheerfully, content to bear the trials and miseries of our condition; but they are increasing as well as persistent, for these our enemies are insatiable, they daily take from us our possessions, and we, wretched creatures that we are, permit them to do so in silence, nay, we are even compelled to be thankful when they inflict on us no more serious evil than robbery, and have to force ourselves to a sort of gratitude, bethinking ourselves at the same time of what we can find to give them when they next come to make a demand.

“But, my lord, they draw the very eyes from our head, and the wrongs they have inflicted on us have infected our whole being, so that they would almost appear to have become incurable. For our enemies now know that we possess nothing more to give them, and as their covetousness acknowledges no bounds, they are preparing to seize and plunder our cities and fortresses. At a word, the Christians have carried sword and fire over all Spain; the points of their lances and the keen edge of their swords have drunk and are drinking streams of Moslemah blood, while those who have escaped with life from the sanguinary battle, groan in a hard captivity, amidst the tortures inflicted

* In a state of watchfulness and fear, as one ever looking round him for a refuge.

by the cruel hands of their tyrants ; since these infidels think only of bringing us to a miserable end, after having made us suffer indescribable torments.

“It would now appear that they are at this moment preparing to give us the ultimate assault, and believe that the fulfilment of their desires, which is our absolute ruin and subjugation, is no longer distant. But, O faith of God ! can it indeed be possible that the Moslemah have lost the hope and courage which have hitherto enabled them to defend and uphold the truth of our law ? Must the day come when infidelity shall triumph over the true faith ? when the worshippers of a Godhead made up of different persons shall conquer those who confess only the Unity of God ? and shall there be none found to defend us from these oppressors ? Will there be no Redeemer to lift our sacred law once more from the earth to which it has fallen ? and shall the Defender of religion and holy precepts so much needed, fail to appear ? We, have, indeed, no other auxiliary or refuge but in God, before whose exalted throne, whereunto the breath of our lowliest earthly prayer is nevertheless permitted to rise, the Divine goodness hath prepared a refuge even for the vilest and most debased. For our misfortunes there is no earthly consolation ; our calamities are unequalled.

“I have not written earlier to thee, O King of the Moslemah, because I have been employed in the attempt to shield the land from the incursions to which it hath been subjected, and by the siege of Medina Cauria, which may God once more restore to our governance ! but that siege hath all but caused the utter depopulation of this Moslemah territory, being as it is so close on the borders of the foe. My fear lest the city of which I now write to thee should be irretrievably lost to us had been perpetually increasing, because the forces maintained around it by the enemy were augmented daily, until at length the place fell into his power ; an event which has greatly added to our misfortunes. In the midst of Medina Cauria there is a castle of extraordinary strength, and which does indeed surpass every other in the power of its defences ; it is as it were the centre of the centre, and dominates all the parts of the city which surround it, as would the true centre of a circle ; holding

the entire circumference of the district in its ken, and permitting nothing done within a certain limit to be concealed from him who holds that fortress, and who commandeth all, whether near or on the outer extremities of that limit. Insomuch that this citadel was as a fierce and tempestuous wind in the violence with which it poured its defenders on those by whom it was beleaguered, but by a treacherous feint the enemy made himself master of the same, now the towers thereof are in the hands of the proud Infidel, and unless thou, O King, shalt come speedily with thy forces of foot and horse to the aid of the oppressed Moslemah, so shall the whole district be soon given a prey to desolation and ruin. I do not recal to thy memory, O King of the Moslemah, the words of the book of God nor the precepts of our honoured prophet, because among the wise Almas of your land there is more learning as well as more love of letters than we have in our land of Spain.

"This my letter do I send to thee by the hands of a noble Xeque, our chancellor and Alchatib, to the end that if any uncertainty should exist in thy mind as to particular portions of its contents, he might declare and make manifest the truth. He hath accepted the mission for his part, resolving to be the bearer of the letter and the messenger in this embassy, because to do so is a meritorious work, and in the hope of gaining from your power the singular grace of that succour which we need so much. Nor have I hesitated to confide to him all my intentions, having the most perfect trust in his well-assured fidelity, as well as in his knowledge and the clearness with which he will be able to make all known to thee. And herewith do we bid thee heartily farewell."

Now at this time King Alfonso of Galicia was much inflated by the conquest of Toledo, which was as it were the head of Spain, and the chief abode of her ancient kings. He soon became desirous of new victories, and therefore trampled under foot the conventions existing between himself and Aben Abed, King of Seville; nay, was now content with nothing less than the making him a tributary and vassal, as he had done in the case of the unfortunate Yahye Aleadir Ben Alnamun, King of Valencia. Wherefore the Christian King put an end to the peace which then

subsisted between himself and the King of Seville, and which prevented him from falling upon the territory of Andalusia, as he had done on that of Toledo and its Comarcas; writing to Aben Abed and requiring him to resign certain fortresses, which Alfonso enumerated, into the hands of his ambassadors. Alfonso furthermore despatched a considerable force for the purpose of receiving the strongholds in question; or supposing that to be refused, Aben Abed was exhorted at least to admit that the holds in question did of right belong to him, Alfonso Ben Ferdiland, King of Galicia, who required the Sevillian monarch to do this without fail or delay, making manifest in all his words how highly he felt exalted and rejoiced by his lately obtained victories.

The letter of the Christian was conceived in the following terms:—

“From the commander and lord of the two laws and nations, the excellent and powerful King, Don Alfonso Ben Sancho, to the King Almutamed Billah Aben Abed. May God strengthen and enlighten his understanding to the end that he may determine to follow the true path, which is that of safety for him and his people! Salvation and good-will on the part of a King, even the extender of kingdoms and the protector of the nations, whose head hath become grey in the prudent observation and knowledge of things, in the exercise and mastery of arms, and in the perpetual acquisition of victories; in whose house the completion of his designs and the fulfilment of his will is never-failing; under whose banners Victory hath made her abode; who makes the lance and the sword to yield before him, even before his hand, and before the brave countenances of his cavaliers; from whom it comes that the dames and damsels of the Moslemah are clothed in the habits of mourning; He who commands the swords to be bound to the girdles of his warriors that the wail of lamentation and the cry of terror may be heard in your land: Oh, ye who arouse his anger!

“Well dost thou know what hath chanced in the city of Toledo, the head and court of all Spain; nor hath what is befalling its inhabitants and those of its Comarcas been concealed from thine ears. The siege of that city and its conquest have been made known to thee, and if thou and

thine hath hitherto escaped, your time is now come. Nor hath it been so long delayed by any cause but by mine own will and for mine own pleasure; wherefore, if thou art now quiet and undisturbed, do thou bethink thee that the prudence and circumspection of man is best made manifest by the manner in which he looks to himself at critical moments, considering well what it behoves him to do, lest he fall into a snare and suffer calamities for which he can afterwards find no remedy. And now of a truth, if thou dost not fulfil exactly all the conditions that exist between us, and redeem on thy part the word which we have given to each other—for to my heart there is nothing that lies nearer than the redemption of my word, and the preservation of my plighted faith—I will fall on thy territories, and with fire and sword will drive thee from the borders of Spain, without permitting any delays for question and reply, nor shall there be any other messenger between us but the loud clangour of arms, the fierce neighing of the war-horse, the thundering of the Atambours,* and the trumpets that sound to battle. I send thee this notice beforehand, to deprive thee of all excuse for delay, and I warn thee that he only hath need to be in haste whose fears assure him that the event will not be in accordance with his wishes.

“This message I have sent to thee by the hands of the Carmut Albarhan, because I confide in him, because I think him able to conduct and conclude affairs, and believe that he knows how to confer with such persons as command his respect. Treat him with confidence, for he hath prudence for all that thou mayst desire to communicate to him as to whatever may concern thy person and vassals. And now as shall be thy deportment in this matter, so shall hereafter be the works that shall ensue and their effects. Farewell.”

CHAP. XIII.—OF THE REPLY OF ABEN ABED TO THE KING DON ALFONSO, AND OF THE CONVERSATION OF THE KING OF SEVILLE WITH HIS SON.

The letter of the King Don Alfonso appeared highly offensive and haughty to Aben Abed, King of Seville, as

* Atambours: drums used by the Moslemah.

did the proposals made to him on the part of the Gallician sovereign by his messenger Albarhan; and although there were many viziers in the Court of Aben Abed, who advised him to take the safer path, and come to an agreement with Alfonso, even to the paying him tribute, yet Aben Abed, who was a man of an absolute will, was not to be moved by those counsels; he considered the letter of Alfonso as a singular proof of arrogance and rude incivility: he therefore replied to him in verse, for Aben Abed was an excellent poet and very learned, as he did also in prose, and the substance of the latter mission was as follows:—

“From the great and victorious King—sheltered beneath the mercy of God and confiding in his divine goodness—Muhamad Aben Abed, to the proud enemy of Allah, Alfonso, son of Sancho, who entitles himself king of kings and lord of the two nations and laws. May God destroy his vain titles, and grant salvation to those who walk in the right way!

“And now as to thy pretension in calling thyself lord of the two nations, it is a truth that the Moslemah hath a better right to boast of that title than thyself, since they have possessed themselves of the territories of the Christians, and do still hold the same: as also because of the multitude of their vassals and their riches in arms and tributes, for never wilt thou be able to exalt thy power to an equality with ours, nor could all thy law, with each one of its followers, enable thee to attain to such. A fortunate year wouldst thou have cause to declare that in which thou shouldst behold an event so great accomplished. No more sound or prudent counsel could have been given thee than that which thou hast followed, for know that we are about to wake us from our sleep and arouse us from the supine carelessness in which we have lately permitted ourselves to remain. Up to the present time we might have had some thought of paying thee tribute, but not content with that, thou art now desiring to occupy our cities and fortresses. But dost thou not shame thee to have expressed such a wish? Wouldst thou have us resign our towns to thy people, and dost thou command us as if we were thy vassals? I marvel much at the heat and eagerness with which thou hast pressed us to fulfil thy vain and haughty will. Thou hast inflated thy

thoughts by the conquest of Toledo, without reflecting that thou dost not owe that advantage to thy power and the might of thy hand, but to the force and determination of the Divine will, which had in its eternal decrees so destined that it should be, and herein hast thou betrayed thyself into a fatal deception. Well too dost thou know that we also have arms and horses, with a brave people, who do not tremble at the clamours of battle, nor turn their eyes from the horrible face of death. Once engaged in the strife, thou knowest that they are well able to come forth with honour from the work. Our generals are not unacquainted with the ordering of squadrons, the due marshalling of their troops, and the management of the ambush. Nor do they fear to enter amidst the files of thy swords, and they turn not in terror from opposing lances. We ourselves have not shunned to make our couch on the hard earth, with a cloak for our resting-place, nor do we shrink from the watches of the night, or the duty of him who wakes to guard the camp. To us the furious blows of the raging brood of devils brings eternal life.

“And now, that thou mayst see my reply to be meant as it is said, I bid thee know that we hold a well-prepared response to thy demand in the shining swords and sharp lances that with one accord we have taken into our hands. True it is that there is no evil which doth not bring a benefit in its company, and that he who hath determined suddenly incurs as sudden a repentance. When did thy forefathers come happily from the strife with ours, if it were not by some vile baseness, some despicable craft of art, with so many of which thou art provided, but which yet are but of little value when too frequently repeated?

“I perceive that those who counsel thee are but beasts without understanding. Nay, thine is a people of so little worth that they are never found to uphold their vain prating by such works as might accredit the sounding phrase, and accordingly never can we slay them fighting in open field, but must ever drag them forth from within their towers, or combat their craven hordes as they lie hidden within the fastness of a rock or the walls of a city.

✻ “Do these thy counsellors believe us to be deprived of understanding, or consider us unable to comprehend the

vicissitudes to which Men, States, and Kingdoms are subjected? It is true that we have made certain agreements to the effect that neither of us shall use his arms against the other, for which cause I have refrained from aiding the men of Toledo, whether with my forces or counsels, and may God forgive me for that fault, as well as for the fact that I have not earlier opposed myself to thy designs and aggressions. Or rather let me give thanks to God who hath comprised the whole punishment of mine error in the vain words wherewith thou hast insulted us. But as these words do not cut short the thread of life, so do I yet confide in Allah, that he will protect me against thee, nor shall any long time elapse before thou shalt see my warriors in thy land, for God favours and upholds the true faith; he extends salvation to those who know and follow the truth, but turns his face from falsehood and its deccits."

In verse the King of Seville expressed himself as follows :

1. Vile terrors and the debasement of fear find no harbour in the soul of the generous. A manly heart may not endure words like thine, however close the ties of friendship have once entwined around us. 2. Why should I fall in terror before the menaces of thy pride, as shakes the cowardly serf before the rage of his lord? Base and degrading is fear; it suits none save the low souls of the vulgar. 3. If in a dark hour of my destiny I once offered thee pledges of faith, hope thou from my hand nought henceforward but the combat and ruthless assault. 4. Battle by night and by day, desolation that never shall cease. Fire and the sword are thy portion. 5. Yea, such are the gifts that I proffer thee, these are the tributes I pay. Silver and gold are no gauds for thy hand; we approach with the steel of our swords. 6. Greater and mightier far is the God who created the world: Allah, the master of all. Allah, the God of my trust. Greater, I say, than the Cross of thy worship, the symbol that waves on thy banner and gleams on thy blade. 7. Up then, and rush to the battle. Arm thee, I call to the fight! Never again from this day be between us aught milder than slaughter and strife. Alas for the terror of Spain! 8. The sun wades eclipsed in black clouds, tears of blood are bedewing his face; but the hard steel shall light us with myriads of sparks, flashing forth with the groanings of pain.

9. See, the swords are bewildering thine eyes, the confusion of discord is round thee. 10. Nor repentance shall linger afar, when the lance of our warriors glows red in the blood of thy people cast low.

It is related that about this time King Alfonso despatched an ambassador to Seville, and in his company a Jew called Aben Galib, who was the treasurer of the Gallician King, and an important officer as well as a much-trusted servant : the business of this man at the court of Seville being to receive a certain number of doubloons, which Aben Abed, King of Seville, had engaged to pay to King Alfonso. Now the ambassador and the Jew had not taken up their abode in the city, but at a short distance without the gates, where they had erected their pavilions, and thither did Abu Zeidun, the treasurer of Aben Abed, in company with other Viziers, bear the doubloons in question.

But King Alfonso's Jew would not receive those coins, under the pretext that they were not of well-approved gold; he demanded that they should be subjected to the test of fire and the touch-stone. On this there arose discussions and rejoinders, which consumed much time, until at length the Jew proposed that Aben Abed should give him certain ships which he had on the coast, in the place of the doubloons, since that Israelite maintained his refusal to accept the coins without having first assayed them.

The proposal of the Hebrew enraged the King of Seville to so great a degree that he forbade his treasurers to pursue the matter further, and declared that the sum should not be paid in any manner: he added that he would no longer endure the insolence of the base crew whom Don Alfonso had sent to beard him; and that same night he dispatched certain of his slaves to the tents of the ambassador and the Jew, when they put the latter to death with many strokes of their daggers, sorely maltreating the Christians likewise, who had come in the train of the ambassador. Whether this last outrage was perpetrated by the slaves in their unbridled license, or was done by order of certain amongst the viziers, to gratify Aben Abed, is not known, but it is averred that the king showed no marks of regret or resentment when the Christian ambassador complained to him, on the following day, of the disorders which had been com-

mitted. The embassy of Alfonso thereupon departed from Seville, vowing vengeance and threatening reprisals on the part of his king.

Aben Abed was far from being insensible to the extent of the error and iniquity which he had thus committed, and some of his viziers even advised him to send an apology for that event to King Alfonso, attributing the violence suffered by the Jew to the rage of the people at the marks of distrust which he had shown. But Aben Abed, determined to break with Alfonso, thought only of preparing for the struggle about to ensue: wherefore, calling to him his son Raxid, who had received the oath of allegiance as his successor, and already took an important part in the government of the state, he addressed him in these words:—

“O my son, we are as orphans in Andalusia, standing between a stormy sea and a ruthless as well as a powerful enemy: we have no protector that can avail us ought, save God the Highest alone. From the Ameers of Andalusia thou seest well that we can hope but little, since they can do nothing either for our aid or defence; while on the other hand, the conquests and power of this Alfonso, the enemy of Allah, are also known to thee, and thou hast seen that by his good fortune and the constancy with which he has made war upon Toledo during seven years, he has made himself master of that city and its Comarcas, which he has peopled with infidels and the vilest of men. The enemy of God had long dissembled his intention of oppressing us, and making our land his prey, but now that he has raised his head I much doubt me lest his obstinacy and the good fortune of his arms should enable him to obtain the mastery of our kingdom; nay, I cannot but look to see him advancing at no distant period upon our own city, and if he once bring hither his famous troops, and seat his camp before our walls, it will be difficult to deliver ourselves from his power.

“And now the best resource that I can perceive in this extremity is that we entreat the succour of that new conqueror of Africa, Juzef Aben Taxfin, although we cannot do this without peril, as hath already been declared: and of a truth this Moslemah causes me scarcely less fear and distrust than doth the arrogance of the accursed Alfonso. By our continual wars, the treasures we might have once

commanded are exhausted, while the revenues and imposts have been much diminished by the interruptions given to the culture of the earth, in consequence of the perpetual incursions and destruction of their fields to which the labourers of the realm have been subjected. Our armies also have lost much of their efficiency, and the warriors no longer appear in troops at our call, as they formerly did, while those whom we do obtain are faint-hearted idlers, full of terror and discouragement. But there is even yet worse, for it is not to be concealed that the people have ceased to give us their affection; nay, they have even learned to abhor us, and not they only, but the nobles also, in such sort that I see no other refuge for our safety than the doubtful one of a recourse to this Juzef Aben Taxfin, whom they call King of the Moslemah."

To these words the son of the king, even Raxid Obeidallah, made answer and said: "My father and my lord,—Thou hast then resolved to attract into Spain that ambitious Aben Taxfin, who hath come forth from the deserts of Alkibla* to subjugate all the tribes of Almagreb and Mauritania? But do not be deceived; this Juzef, with his barbarous people, will fall on us and our possessions, as they have done on those of the Ameers in Africa; they will scatter our armies, break up our confederary of the Spanish Ameers, and eventually drive us from our beloved country."

To this Aben Abed replied: "God forbid, my son, that I should bring on myself the reproach of having ruined our Andalusia, or that it should be said of Aben Abed, 'He hath made the land an abode of Infidels and the heritage of the Christian. Never can I consent that maledictions on my name should be published from the Alminbars of our mosques, and that my memory should become execrable to the Moslemah, as hath happened to other most unhappy kings. No, by Alláh! No, my son! rather would I prefer to make myself the slave of this King of Morocco, and become the servant of his camels, or the shepherd of his flocks. Yea, this and worse, rather than be called a tributary Ameer and vassal to those dogs the Christians."

Hearing that declaration, the Prince Raxid Obeidallah

* Alkibla: the South.

made answer: "Do then that which God hath inspired thee to do;" and the King Aben Abed replied, "I confide to His Divine goodness, and will trust that what He shall lead me to do will be good and advantageous to us as well as for all the Moslemah."

CHAP. XIV.—OF THE EMBASSY DESPATCHED BY ABEN ABED TO THE KING OF THE MOSLEMAH, JUZEF ABEN TAXFIN.

Maintaining the resolution thus announced, Aben Abed prepared his embassy; he wrote a letter with his own hand, and caused others to be written by his Alehatib: that of the King was as follows:—

"This letter for the presence of the Prince of the Moslemah, the protector of the faith, the restorer of the true sect of the Caliph. To the Imaum of the Moslemah, and king of the faithful, Abu Jacob Juzef Ben Taxfin, the illustrious and exalted by the greatness of his nobles, the laudator of the Divine majesty and of the power of the Highest, the resigned to God and to Heaven, who doth not inflate his thoughts by his honour and greatness, but contenteth himself with the rewards which God hath conferred on him,—Muhamad Aben Abed sendeth greeting with salutation in the highest, and as is due to the high and sovereign person of the Moslemah king. The mercy of God also and his benediction be upon the Ameer of the faithful.

"This letter do I send thee; and its discourse, leaving all other things, directeth itself solely to thy gracious majesty, and speaketh to thee from Medina Seville, being written in the middle of the Moon of Giumada Primera, in the year 479.*

"It is certain, O King of the Moslemah, whom may God exalt and protect with his law, that we, the Arabs of Andalusia, have not preserved our illustrious tribes so distinctly apart in our abodes of Spain, but that they have become interfused the one with the other. Our families, thus mingled, have finally dispersed themselves throughout

the land of Spain, in such sort that little if any communication hath of late been held between them and our Cabilas dwelling in Africa. This want of union hath of late divided our interests, and from that division have resulted schism and discord, whereby the force of states is ever diminished: our natural enemies have thus been enabled to prevail against us. We are now therefore in such a condition that we have none to aid and protect us against him who is seeking to destroy us, and trample our country under his feet. Every day hath the rancour and malevolence of this our foe, even Alfonso, King of Galicia, become more and more insufferable. He hath entered our territories, as might a raging hound; hath occupied our fortresses, hath carried their Moslemah defenders captive, and now menaceth to subject us to his yoke in such sort that none shall be suffered to remain who dare oppose resistance to his will.

“Nor have the Ameers of Spain yet roused themselves to the defence of those oppressed by this man. They have looked negligently on the ruin of their kindred, friends, and neighbours, and have not lifted their banners for the defence of our law, although it is a truth that this might have been done, had all been united in love as they ought to have been, and had each man been willing to perform his duty.

“But they are not now what they once were, seeing that the luxury of their lives, the soft breathing of these airs of Andalusia, the delicate baths of odoriferous waters, the debilitating amusements, the delicate meats, and the fresh fountains with which they regale themselves, and which are their daily habit, have deprived our people of their pristine force, causing them to shrink from the labours and hardships that must ever be suffered by all who engage in war, insomuch that not even the most potent of interests, nor the cause which of all others is most righteous, can avail to arouse them from their apathy.

“Thus we have brought ourselves to a pass wherein we no longer dare to lift up our heads, and since you, my lord, are a descendant of our ancestor Homair, a powerful Ruler of his people, and of wide extended regions, we betake ourselves to your protection with a perfect confidence, entreating aid from God our Creator, and from yourself, imploring you to come without loss of time into Spain and

do battle against our enemy, the infidel and faithless, who hath exalted himself against us, determined to destroy our Faith, and seeking the dishonour of our Law. Come then without delay, O King, and awaken in Andalusia that zeal for the true path wherein God hath commanded us to walk, which hath but too manifestly cooled, defending the law and the doctrines of our honoured prophet, for which deeds thou wilt merit that eternal reward and those Divine recompenses which thou canst not fail to receive in liberal measure from the hand of God, the exalted and powerful, whose salvation, Divine mercy, and supreme benediction, be with thine exalted greatness."

Such was the letter of the king; that written in his name by his Alchatib Abu Bekir Ben Gedi was in the words which follow:—

"To the great and powerful sovereign, by God's favour King of the Moslemah and defender of the law: the Prince of the Almoravides, Abu Jacob Juzef Aben Taxfin, with whose light and splendour Allah hath illuminated all the regions of the earth, and by whose perfection God hath beautified and adorned all his creatures, rejoicing us also, who follow the same Law with the excellent king, rewarded by the favour of God and distinguished by his Divine mercy:

"We, Mohamud Aben Abed, the confident in God and supported by his power: salvation to the presence and sovereignty of him who is established in the faith, and whose faith and constancy are manifest to all the world.

"God hath fortified his law by the sanctions of unity and concord, and hath forbidden us to accept the errors and false laws which are contrary to our own, together with the promulgation of which he hath favoured his servants with a new rule of government, which inculcates austerity and gravity of life; of your constancy in which, O King, as well as of your illustrious descent, your sublime valour, and the zeal which hath made you the admiration of the world, there have come to us continued and ample accounts. We also know that God hath filled you with his mercy, which, as a beneficent dew, resuscitates and restores the zeal of man for the path of God, establishes him within the limits of justice, and gives him the true measure of equity, after which uprightness and rectitude are judged and rewarded.

“But to our people on the contrary there hath happened a calamity which is such as to cause all that hath preceded it, however lamentable and grievous, to be lightly considered and forgotten, and to make every man stand as in confusion and amazement at the enormity of this new evil that hath now befallen us. The cause of our misfortune is the covetousness and ambition of a cruel enemy, who is constantly making on us a war of fire and blood, his heart being so completely filled with an uncontrolable hatred to our law and to all who follow its precepts, that we can see no hope of change, and know of no remedy by which the fury of the same can be attempered. The power and pride of this foe increase with each new day, while we sink lower and become less able to resist, in the like proportion. The Christian adversary augments his force and assembles his confederates for our ruin, but we unhappily agree in nothing, save in slumbering altogether, and in looking on with indifference while our enemy exalts himself by the destruction of our brethren in the faith: neither have we once gathered together to attack him in our turn, or to make an effort for the common defence. We sleep in a profound lethargy; the perpetual injuries of our inimical fortune do not avail to awaken us, nor do the grave calamities which are the inevitable results of this unhappy state of things suffice to arouse us from our slumbers.

“Even now hath this our Christian enemy sent us a letter filled with lightnings and thunders, mingled with traitorous promises and deceptive words, whereby he would fain persuade us to yield to him our fortresses and cities, not excepting the mosques of our worship, which he would have us abandon to him that he might fill them with his friars, and exalting his adored crosses on their lofty towers, might cause the mass and the requiem to be there sung, where now the sacred Azala* is daily heard. At a word, he would take from us the land of our abode, which he would then people with his Christians.

* The Azala.—The daily prayers in the mosques are so called collectively; of these there are five—that of Azohbi, or the dawn; Adohar, or mid-day; Alasur or Alzur, afternoon; Almagreb or Almagrib, the sunset; and Alatema, or nightfall.—*Trans.*

"But God hath established by thee, O King of the Moslemah, a possession and dominion whose greatness and elevation he hath blessed and shall protect. He hath made thee his minister and envoy, to the end that thou, by the virtuous force of thine arms, mightest contribute to the maintenance of the towers of his law, and that on this occasion thou mayst participate in the splendour of his divine light.

"Well art thou provided with those whom thou mayst call to accompany thee. Armies eager to purchase paradise at the cost of their blood and life are not wanting to thee, and thou art rich in the possession of men who aspire to behold their weapons glancing in the sacred war.

"If desire for earthly wealth can move thee, here are not wanting the rich textures, the jewels, the gold, the silver, and the precious ornaments which form the most costly stores of there. We have fountains, moreover, pouring their fresh waters, which have the clear purity of crystal, amidst the shady groves of delicious gardens, whose amenity is as that of paradise; but if, as we believe, O King, thy heart be moved only by that which appertains to the service of God, and conduces to the gain of eternal life, then thou hast here presented to thee an occasion the most opportune to thy desires, since in these regions the sanguinary battle can never fail thee, nor shall there be wanting the sharp skirmish wherein may gleam perpetually the pointed lances and the brightly glittering swords, rendered bare by the powerful arms and wielded in the strong hands of thy warriors. This sacred paradise and this holy grove hath God planted here, that ye may be translated from the shadows of the waving banner and the glancing panoply, to the bowers of that blissful abode where he hath reserved for you the bright recompense of your merits.

"We seek our refuge in thy power, and make our shields of thy strong arm, with that of God and his angels, who shall fight with thee against these infidels by whom we are threatened with perpetual war. Be moved, then, O Amcer of the faithful, and let thyself be guided by that divine word, which saith, 'Slay them, for God shall give them torment and a pain of bitterness by your hands. He hath poured his malediction upon them, and will give you the

victory over their hordes, with salvation, which he shall distribute with a liberal hand, to the noble breasts of the faithful.'

"In conclusion, may God unite us as one, and draw us together by the word of unity, to the end that we may help ourselves, through the mercy of Allah, and the benefits which he hath conferred on us in his law, that we may give him praises for the same, by calling on his holy name, as well as by the propagation of his decrees, and the knowledge of his goodness."

"The salvation of God, with his mercy and benediction, be with the King of the Moslemah, the defender of the law of God and the protector of the faith."

The noble ambassadors of Aben Abed, King of Seville, delivered these letters to the King of the Moslemah, Juzef Ben Taxfin, making him a relation moreover of the miserable condition of things in Spain, and describing the haughty insolence of the King Don Alfonso, as well as the numerous advantages obtained by that sovereign. Wherefore, having read the letters of Aben Abed, and heard the relations of his ambassadors, Juzef Aben Taxfin showed them to the Xequés of his Court, who were there in presence, as were certain of his kinsmen, to whom he said, "What is your opinion as to these requests, and in regard to the expectations of the Andalusians?"

To these words the men of his kindred, who had arrived from the Desert but a short time previously, and to whom the name of Christian was then for the first time made known, replied, "Oh Ameer of the Moslemah, it appears to us a just and proper thing that every Mosleman should succour his brethren of the Moslemah who believe in God and in his Prophet, and a shameful relation it would be for us were it recorded against us that we had a neighbour and brother of our own law so near to us that between us and him there is nothing but a streamlet or narrow line of water, and that we had nevertheless permitted him to remain alone without help, while his enemy devoured him at a single mouthful. But despite our opinions, do thou, Oh Ameer, decide as shall seem to thee most advisable, since the power and sovereign command belong to God and to thyself alone."

King Juzef then took counsel apart and in secret with

